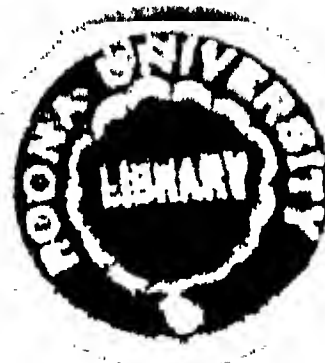


MY FRIEND

# THE BARRISTER.

*(FULLY ILLUSTRATED.)*

437



BY

**K. E. CHAMAT,**  
*BAR-AT-LAW.*

**BOMBAY.**

**1908.**

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“ Soon she was locked in the arms of Rustim nestling her head against his shoulder, Rustim imbibing the nectar of happiness from her pure and saintly lips.”

[See p. 196.]

# CONTENTS.



CHAP.	PAGE.
I. His Early Life ... ..	1
II. The Villa at Bandra ... ..	11
III. The Voyage to England ... ..	21
IV. The Boarding House in Bedford Place. Major Spooney's Wedding ...	42
V. The Middle Temple ... ..	58
VI. A Lecture at Exeter Hall ... ..	63
VII. An English Home ... ..	75
VIII. Mrs. Spooney's Liaison ... ..	82
IX. Mr. Popgun in Trepidation ... ..	94
X. A Disillusion ... ..	104
XI. Meeting at Westminster Hall. The Indian National Congress ...	111
XII. The Tabernacle ... ..	155
XIII. A Tea Party at Kensington ... ..	164
XIV. Mr. Gaspot in Love ... ..	170
XV. A Revelation ... ..	176
XVI. Major Spooney at Poorgunj ... ..	181
XVII. A Legal Conundrum ... ..	183
XVIII. Cupid's Dart ... ..	187
XIX. A Holiday at Brighton. Rustim's Engagement ... ..	190
XX. A Sorrowful Parting ... ..	197
XXI. An Ill-Fated Letter ... ..	200
XXII. An Exile at Home ... ..	205
XXIII. A Terrific Crash ... ..	212
XXIV. A Marriage without Love ... ..	218



# CONTENTS.

ii.

CHAP.			PAGE.
XXV.	A Monk without a Cowl	... ..	224
XXVI.	A Police Investigation	... ..	226
XXVII.	The Court of Mr. Magnus Myope	...	235
XXVIII.	A Legal Luminary	... ..	245
XXIX.	India's Loyalty	... ..	252
XXX.	A Double-Dealing	... ..	256
XXXI.	A Confession	... ..	258
XXXII.	A Windfall	... ..	263
XXXIII.	An Everlasting Union	... ..	264

## P R E F A C E .

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I HAVE ventured to step out of the prosaic domain of law to revel for a while in the romantic regions of fiction. My object in doing so is not to earn fame for myself, or what a cynical critic would call notoriety; but it is because I feel that Englishmen, who are generally averse to the study of Indian politics, and are woefully ignorant of the traditions, needs, and aspirations of the people of India, may perhaps be tempted to devote a few minutes of their leisure-hours to that subject, if it is presented to them in the pleasing garb of a love-story. In the following pages I have attempted to point out some of the ugly pitfalls of the Administration, and to depict the prejudice and distrust which unfortunately exist in the minds of not a few Anglo-Indians against the people of India, and which are assiduously kept alive by inflated, insidious and one-sided criticism constantly appearing in a considerable number of Anglo-Indian journals, supplemented by unwise utterances of a few officials moulded in the pernicious cast of racial superiority, infallible judgment and self-interestedness. There are perhaps no other people on God's earth who are more mercilessly misjudged and thoughtlessly maligned at the present day than the Indians, and unless the mist of prejudice and distrust

against them is raised, there can be, I am afraid, no guarantee that the political horizon of India will always remain free from threatening clouds of discord, dissension and turmoil.

It is prophesied by some sages that the East will always be the East and the West the West, no matter what measures may be adopted to unite them together. How far that prophecy is untrue, pessimistic, and based upon insufficient knowledge of the facts of Indian life, the story of "My Friend the Barrister" faintly attempts to outline.

# MY FRIEND THE BARRISTER.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### HIS EARLY LIFE.

IN the picturesque but now over-crowded suburb of Bandra, about 10 miles from the great Metropolis of the Presidency of Bombay, in a cosy villa which commanded a magnificent view of the sea close by, was born the subject of this biography in the Christian year 18—. His birth was an occasion of great rejoicing in the family. His parents had always felt great disappointment that, although they had six buxom-looking girls to gladden their hearts, they had no son to inherit the family name and the vast fortune which the father had amassed by commercial enterprise and domestic thrift. Long before the time of the arrival of the new-comer drew near, the mother consulted some astrologers as she had done on similar interesting occasions in the past. These sages were unanimous in their prediction, which,

unlike previous occasions, came true this time. The heir was born, the mother was delighted, and the sages were handsomely rewarded by her for what, after all, was but a happy guess. Blind faith! Delusive hope! Monstrous credulity! How often have our womenfolk, aye, some of our level-headed men, succumbed to the wiles of such humbugs? But this is a digression. About four days after his birth the new-comer was christened Rustim after that great Persian hero, whose heroic deeds have been sung by the famous Persian Poet Firdusi, and whose memory is fondly cherished by the modern Parsis. Then came the eventful night devoted to the Goddess of Fortune. There is a tradition among Parsis that on the sixth night after a child is born the Goddess of Fortune descends from her ethereal abode to this material world to write down its future. She is supposed to be a capricious Goddess. Therefore, to propitiate her, a clean sheet of paper, a new pen, a bottle of ink, a garland of flowers and some silver coins of the Realm (an odd number invariably) are laid in a tray beside the cradle of the child. The Goddess must have been in a fretful mood when she penned the future of the infant Rustim; otherwise, a life which had budded in hope and promise would not have prematurely withered

in misery and despair. Oh, false Goddess! Thou art doomed. The twentieth century has laid bare thy imposture, and has dwindled the number of thy votaries.

I would skip over the period of Rustim's babyhood. I dare say that, like all other babies, he laughed a little and cried a lot, emerged from his long clothes at the age of seven months, then learnt to crawl, then to toddle and finally to walk steadily. His lisping utterances must have delighted his mother's heart, and his pulling his father's whiskers with his tiny hands must have been ascribed to filial attachment; but we are not concerned with such light matters. At the age of five he was sent to school. His parents committed a serious blunder there. He was of a delicate constitution, and five hours' sitting from day to day in an ill-ventilated room on the ground floor of a dingy and foul-smelling house, situated in an equally dingy and foul-smelling locality, seriously impaired his health. In any case, he began learning at a too early age. Harrowing accounts of broken constitution, impaired eyesight, exhausted brain and an early grave, consequent upon a too early schooling of children, would be forthcoming in abundance. Would that parents realize their mistake!

When seven years old a serious malady befell poor Rustim or Russy as his parents endearingly called him. He was down with small-pox. The attack was severe, and his life was in peril. The aid of guardian angels was invoked and vows were made. The mother became frantic and the father disconsolate. Their darling son was in the grip of death. The best of physicians were called in, and money was not spared. By degrees the child recovered. The recovery was miraculous, since the liver had become obstinate, and had threatened to strike work in consultation with its friend the kidney. It was an achievement for modern science, and the doctors congratulated themselves. The mother, however, ascribed the recovery to the kindly offices of the guardian angels. Perhaps she was right. Perhaps the doctors were right. Perhaps the *pater familias* was right, who, in his desire to conciliate his spouse and the family doctor, divided the honours equally between the celestial angels and the terrestrial physicians. We are not inclined to hazard an opinion on such a disputatious point. Our hero recovered, but he lost all his strength, and his rich brown complexion lost its hue and became as rough as a nutmeg-grater. During his convalescence his father sent him to various health resorts

instead of to school unlike most other Indian parents. The change did him immense good, and he returned home a picture of health, his skin, which had been furrowed by the recent malady, losing much of its ruggedness. What balm could excel Nature's great balm of fresh and invigorating air? Drugs and decoctions might have stimulated the system, but not imparted the radiant hue of health to the face. All the douches, washes and ointments, which are the refuge of dissipated dandies and jaded belles, would not have half so well succeeded in obliterating the foot-prints of the Goddess Sitla.\* There was a surprise awaiting Rustim. He was perplexed to find a baby-boy in his mother's arm, displaying an acrobatic talent by attempting to shove the big toe of his right foot in his half-opened mouth. This was Rustim's younger brother, born during his absence from home, or who, as his mother told him, had glided down from the heavens on the wings of a fairy. There was a marked contrast between the dispositions of the two brothers. One was the antipode of the other.

Rustim did not go back to his old school, of which the presiding genius was a Hindu pedagogue, who was always clad most shabbily,

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\* The Goddess of Small-pox.



ate sparingly and thrashed his pupils heartily. These were regarded by many people as the eccentricities of a genius. We, however, know differently. He was underpaid, and consequently was ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed and ill-tempered. It was always a problem to him how to keep himself, a wife and four children on a slender income of Rs. 12 a month. But he lived somehow, his wife lived somehow, his four children lived somehow—I mean they dragged out a miserable existence. His constant companion was a birch—the insignia of his office—which never failed to inspire awe in the hearts of his pupils, and to make them yelp and howl whenever he greeted them with it. You should have looked at his scarecrow face expand into a smile whenever a new scholar was admitted into the school. The smile broadened and the eyes twinkled in proportion to the presents made to him by the parents of the scholar. Gala was that day if the parents paid him a couple of rupees and presented him with a basketful of sweets for himself and his pupils. He distributed some of the sweets among the pupils, taking care to preserve a goodly portion of it for himself and his family. He then invoked the blessings of the Goddess Saraswati\* upon the head of the

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\* The Goddess of learning.

new-comer, and dispersed the school, as soon as the initiation ceremony was concluded, to the great joy of the pupils. That primitive school and its presiding genius are no more existing, but the like of them still flourish in the country side by side with the schools founded by Government and private enterprise upon European principles.

As stated before, Rustim did not rejoin his old school after his return home from up-country. His father put him into an Anglo-Vernacular school established by Government. This school was much better housed than the other. Still, its habitation was unsuited for a school altogether, both from hygienic and æsthetic points of view. It was an ideal place for stunting the growth both of body and mind of the children attending it. Rustim did not take to school-life kindly. He conceived an inveterate hatred for it which continued up to the time of his death. His attendance at school was most irregular, and he revolted against cramming, which, in his manhood, he described as an engine of torture, which cramped imagination, crushed originality and sucked dry the luscious juice of the mind. He blamed the teachers, but not as much as he blamed the Universities, which were the

root of the evil. Faulty curricula and stiff examinations have always been the bane of students in India. They are required to learn too many subjects within too short a time and stuff their over-taxed memories with subjects which are of little use to them in after-life. If Lord Curzon, the late Viceroy of India, had attempted to grapple with this evil, instead of forcing the nostrum of the new Universities Act down the throats of an unwilling people, he would have earned the gratitude of the country. He made the Universities a department of the State. The country, with an united voice, denounced the measure as a retrograde and unwise measure. Lord Curzon did not heed the protest. He was a masterful Viceroy, but unfortunately for him and the country he thought a great deal too much of himself and too little of those whom the Sovereign had placed under his care.

We shall leave his Lordship here, and hasten to complete our remarks about Rustim's education. Rustim finished his course at the Anglo-Vernacular School, which being a branch of the Elphinstone High School, he repaired thither to prosecute his study further. He matriculated at the age of sixteen, joined the Elphinstone College, at which he studied

for three years, and graduated at the University of Bombay when he had just emerged from his teens. The Elphinstone School and the Elphinstone College are a fitting memorial raised to the memory of an illustrious governor, who was foremost in the ranks of the pioneers of education in the Western Presidency, and whose memory is still reverently cherished by a grateful people.

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Brilliant as Rustim was he never shone at school or college. He took no scholarships and carried no prizes. Yet, he was always the best-informed boy in his class. His reading was extensive, and, although he neglected the text-books, he drank deep at the fountain of learning. Fiction, politics, history and poetry were his favourite subjects. His fellow-students who carried away prizes were mere pigmies before this intellectual Goliath. They surpassed him, because he hated cramming and read his text-books hurriedly. His graduation elated his mother, but she could not be easily prevailed upon to consent to his proceeding to England to study for the Bar. The idea of a long separation from her son was hateful to her, and she would not have relaxed, as she eventually did, but for the

combined efforts of the father, the son and an astrologer. The father preached to her upon the duties of parents, the son assailed her with kisses and thus hit her in the most vulnerable part of her body, and the astrologer allayed her fears by predicting a safe return home and a glorious future for her darling boy. The mother assented. Friday, the 10th day of August 18— was fixed for Rustim's departure for England by the steamship 'Good Hope.'

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## CHAPTER II.

## THE VILLA AT BANDRA.

THE sky was overcast. The moon, after a vain but valiant struggle to peep through the fleeting clouds, disappeared in despair. The wind struck up a most weird music, and the yonder sea enraptured by its supernatural melody danced a most weird dance to its accompaniment. The wind screeched, and the waves overlapped each other in a fantastic manner; the wind howled and the waves went up and down, high and low, till they broke forth their hoary heads in majestic sprays on the rugged shore. The rain came down helter-skelter and threatened to deluge the earth. The performance was most bewitching, and pleased the gods in the heavens who encored it by incessant peals of thunder and flashes of lightning. Nature seemed to be bent upon a spree; but its conviviality was of a short duration. After two hours the wind stopped its music, the waves their dancing and the gods their encores. The rain alone continued to pour for a while longer, but it soon made its

exit in desperation of loneliness. There remained not a vestige of Nature's feast, except broken trees, muddy puddles and smashed-up tiles, which had been blown down from roofs of houses. The sky cleared up, and the stars twinkled merrily, released from their recent bondage. Mrs. B—— breathed a sigh of relief at the change in the weather, for her darling son was to sail for England on the morrow. It was midnight then. The fond mother, who had lain awake during the raging of the tempest, jumped out of her bed, and fervently prayed to God that the next day might be a sunshiny day, and that her son might have a pleasant voyage. Long was her prayer, earnest her supplication. "Cock-a-doodle-doo" cried a grateful cock in the backyard of the Villa to announce to its mistress that the morning was advancing. She repaired to bed with a light heart, and soon fell asleep.

The day broke. It was a lovely morning. The sky was bright and clear. The air was fresh and crisp. The trees looked green and clean after their night's ablution. A few drops of rain which had clung to the foliage glistened like orient pearls in the refulgent rays of the rising sun. The birds, who had been drenched through overnight, flapped their wings and

hopped about from branch to branch in ecstasy.

- The sentimental turkey-cock in the garden of the Villa was also affected, and became more spooney than he ever was before. He swelled his gill, spread his feathers and clucked an amorous cluck to his mate by his side. In fact, it was a most perfect morning, and was the harbinger of an equally perfect day. Mrs. B—— was delighted. God Almighty had listened to her prayer. Do not sneer at her belief, sceptical reader. India is a land of divine
- faith. Its people, whatever may be their caste or creed, have unbounded faith in God and His goodness. May the wave of atheism and scepticism, which has flooded Europe, never spread to India in the name of civilization as various European vices have done! We fear we are moralizing. Our province is to relate humdrum facts only. Well, the morning was bright as stated before. The Villa was astir with bustle and commotion. Rustim's six sisters discussed their toilette loudly, his father sipped a cup of coffee philosophically, his brother attacked a couple of boiled eggs and some buttered toast ravenously, and his mother skipped about from the parlour to the kitchen, and from the kitchen to the parlour back, and from there to the drawing-room with great animation, in order to superintend the prepara-



tion of the breakfast, which, she had decided, should be sumptuous. In due course the breakfast appeared on the carved blackwood table in the parlour, and was done ample justice to by a few friends and kinsmen, who had been invited by Mr. and Mrs. B——. It was a misnomer to call that meal a breakfast, and it could not be called a luncheon. It was too late for the one and too early for the other, and contained dishes and viands, which made it a combination-meal—breakfast and luncheon combined. Still, it was a dainty meal, and would have feasted the heart of an epicure. The breakfast over, the party adjourned into the drawing-room, where Mrs. B——, in accordance with a time-honoured custom observed on auspicious occasions, made Rustim stand on a low wooden pedestal with his face towards the East, made a vertical mark of red powder on his forehead and stuck some rice on it, put a garland of flowers round his neck and a cocoanut in his hand, together with a substantial sum of money as a present from her, and blessed him with words of mouth accompanied by a quaint pass of the hands and cracking of the knuckles over her temples, which is a symbol for good wishes among the female population of India. The mother embraced her son, and, overcome by grief, shed warm

tears. The sisters embraced their brother and wept; the brother embraced the brother and cried; the father embraced the son, and though resolved not to give way, wept as he had never wept before. Rustim was not less affected. Tears met tears and sobbings met sobbings. There was hugging and re-hugging, kissing and re-kissing, and embracing and re-embracing between parents and son, brother and brother, and brother and sisters. The scene was a most touching one.

The parting of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, of husbands and wives is painful everywhere, but nowhere is the grief so very keen and abiding and attended by pathos as in India. The friends and relatives also bedecked Rustim with garlands, and presented him with packetfuls of money, so that he was smothered with flowers and the capacious pockets of his coat groaned under their weight. Then Rustim and his parents made way for the porch, under which there stood their rubber-tyred brougham, drawn by a spirited chestnut Arab. A smartly clad groom flew open the door of the carriage, and in went the trio, bang went the door, up jumped the groom on the box beside the coachman, who cracked his whip, and the horse pranced gaily down the broad drive of the Villa. Rustim's brother and

sisters and the friends and relatives followed the brougham either in their own or hack • carriages. Scarcely had the equipage emerged from the gateway of the Villa, and turned down the road leading to the Bandra Station, a band struck up a lively air. That band was no other than the crack 'nan-khatai' at the head of a marriage procession, which was wending its way homewards from Mount Mary's Church on the Bandra Hill. A most wonderful band is the 'nan-khatai.' The musicians composing it have wonderful lungs, wonderful talent, wonderful imagination and wonderful originality. They can blow flutes, thump the drum and clang the cymbals from morning till midnight with scarcely any intermission. It is a wonder that their lungs do not burst, and their arms do not drop out of their sockets. Wonderful mortals! They want no repertoire and no conductor to lead them. Their ears and their whims are their best guides. They begin with polka, wander to mazurka, return to polka again, and wind up with quadrille with such interspersions of Oriental flourishes as their imaginative brains may suggest to them. There is an idea lurking in their minds that the louder the thumping the better is the music. So, they thump the drum vigorously, blow the flute shrilly, and clang the cymbals



“That band was no other than the crack ‘nan-khata’ which was wending its way homewards from Mount

ssion,  
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violently to the delight of the urchins and the admiration of those who are ignorant of European music. These versatile gentlemen are not less versatile in the selection of their attire as in their performance of music. They do not believe in uniformity, and as becomes men of genius, devise their own attire untrammelled by conventionalities. They, however, display a great partiality for scarlet colour. One of them is all ablaze in a scarlet coat, scarlet trousers and a scarlet broad band across the shoulder with a scarlet tassel dangling from it. Another wears a scarlet coat, black trousers and ammunition boots, which were once the property of Tommy Atkins, Esqr., who, one day overcome by a desire to drink something strong, sold them clandestinely to a dealer in old clothes. A third sports a scarlet coat, grey breeches and a cockade black cap, which had once adorned the person of an illustrious member of his distinguished fraternity. A fourth is in a red coat, striped trousers, a tasselled cap, and a blue handkerchief tied round his neck. A couple of the players regale themselves in white 'pehrans,'\* tight pantaloons, coloured waistcoats, embroidered puggies, and patent-leather shoes, which are down at the heels and open at the toes,

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\* Shirts.

probably for ventilating the feet, in deference to a scientific age. Three or four of the remainder, who make up the complement, display bare feet, and bedeck their waists or necks with handkerchiefs of variegated bright colours, probably to set off their begrimed clothes to advantage. Such are the great minstrels of Bombay, who have earned for themselves the sobriquet of 'nan-khatai.'

Mrs. B—— was delighted at the strain of the music, not because she was very fond of it, but because it was a good omen for Rustim. As soon as the carriage approached the bandsmen, she put her head out of its window, seeing which the bandsmen flattered themselves upon the excellence of their performance, and the bridegroom, who was strutting along under a crimson canopy, flattered himself upon the excellence of his dress, which was most quixotic, and ogled at his bride, who was in a bullock-cart which was jolting behind him. The bridegroom belonged to the Christian fishermen community of Bandra. For once in his life, in honour of the occasion, he discarded his Native habiliments, which consisted of a sleeveless jacket, a tall red cap and a piece of cloth wrapped round the waist, which did duty for unmentionables. His wedding-dress

was grotesque and comical. He wore a coat, which was neither a morning-coat, nor a frock-coat, nor a tail-coat, but was a crimson coat of some antediluvian cut, braided with gold at the cuffs and adorned with brass buttons at the breast and tinsel epaulettes at the shoulders. He wore yellow breeches, striped stockings and patent-leather shoes, which being too large for the feet, threatened to come off at every step. He wore white gloves, and carried a glaring pink silk handkerchief in his hand and an artificial white rose of stupendous magnitude in his buttonhole. His head was bedecked with a three-cornered hat with plumes at the top, which he took off now and then in salutation, displaying a clean-shaven head with a tuft of hair on the crown. Massive silver and gold chains hung round his neck and huge gold rings suspended from the over-stretched lobes of his ears. Almost all these ornaments had been borrowed by him from members of his community, and the wedding-dress had been hired by him from its ingenious inventor, who had already recovered its value fifty times over by letting it out at exorbitant rent to about two scores of fishermen-bridegrooms in the past.

A more auspicious omen than a wedding-procession Rustim could not have had. Mrs.



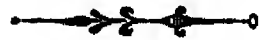
B——'s spirits were highly elated at its sight, and she talked about it unceasingly, and most of the occupants of the carriages, which had been following her brougham, talked about it also, until the Bandra Station was reached. A train soon arrived, and the whole party proceeded by it to the Church Gate Station, from whence they drove to the Apollo Bunder. That historic Bunder looked as picturesque then as it does now, and commanded the same magnificent view. But there were not then the magnificent Taj Mahal Hotel and some of the many stately buildings, which now rear their heads in its neighbourhood. A few friends of Rustim who had assembled at the Bunder to wish him god-speed gathered round him, and made him floral presents. A steam-launch then neared the Pier-head, in order to carry passengers to the 'Good Hope,' which was puffing hard in deep water at a considerable distance from the Pier. Her arrival was a signal for saying good-bye. The leave-taking was most pathetic. Rustim then descended the main steps of the Pier, and as he entered the launch she moved away shrieking, puffing and shaking the water. Up went the handkerchiefs in the hands of those who were at the Pier. They waved theirs, and Rustim waved his, until this mode of telegraphy became useless by the launch proceeding farther and farther.



## CHAPTER III.



## THE VOYAGE TO ENGLAND.



IT was 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The ship weighed anchor, and the pilot, who was in charge of her, began to steer her through the magnificent harbour of Bombay. The landward view from her hurricane-deck was simply bewitching under the light blue canopy of Heaven. The great city of commerce, enterprise and activity, with its teeming buildings of various architecture, presented a most picturesque panoramic view in the mellowed light of the sun, which was now being chased by fleeting clouds. All eyes save one were rivetted upon this scene. Rustim alone sat in his deck-chair in deep abstraction. The sun went down the horizon; lamps were lit, but Rustim sat and pondered until the bell for dinner was rung. He then went to his cabin, dressed hurriedly, and proceeded to the saloon, where he sat down to dinner with Europeans for the first time in his life. He trifled with his food, and as soon as the dinner was over he repaired to his cabin, and, with a heavy heart, betook himself to bed.

Sleep! gentle sleep! thou hast been rightly described as Nature's soft nurse by the greatest of English poets. Thy effect upon Rustim was most soothing, for he woke at 6 o'clock next morning, and tripped up to the deck in pyjamas to inhale the fresh morning air of the sea. At 9 o'clock he ate his breakfast, and afterwards walked up and down the deck for want of company. There were only a few passengers on board, as it was the inclement month of August, but some of them were distinguished personages. There were the Hon. Sir Grasping Grabber, K.C.I.E., I.C.S., Member of the Council of his Excellency the Governor-General of India, Mr. Numskull Firebrand, C.I.E., I.C.S., Commissioner of the Province of Highhandabad, Mr. Magnus Myope, I.C.S., Assistant Collector and Sub-divisional Magistrate of Muddlepore, Mr. Polemic Popgun, Superintendent of Police of the District of Poorgunj, Mr. Constancio Upright, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge of Contentpore, and the last but not least important was Mr. Bungling Blowhard, editor of the *Bagpipe Chronicle*. All these gentlemen, except Mr. Constancio Upright, were seated on the deck, absorbed in the contemplation of their greatness. Mr. Upright was busy talking with his wife, who was a very amiable woman.

Feeling lonely, Rustim ventured a remark upon the state of the weather to Mr. Numskull Firebrand, who replied to him snappishly, indignant at being accosted by the stripling of an Indian youth. Rustim was not prepared for such unkindness, and, being sensitive by temperament, skulked to his deck-chair at the farthest end of the deck, feeling very miserable. Mr. Constancio Upright, who had noticed this, was touched. He walked up to Rustim, and feigning ignorance of what he had observed, inquired after his name, his health and his object in going to England. His conversation was soothing and his manners were winning. He introduced Rustim to his wife, who talked to him kindly and encouragingly. Rustim's spirits were revived at a bound, and he felt grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Upright. The acquaintance thus made ripened into friendship, and Rustim always felt happy in their company.

The next two days of the voyage were uneventful. The sky was cloudless, and the sea was unusually calm for the month of August. All hoped that the weather would continue fine, but soon a change came. The sky grew dark. The sun hid his glorious face. The wind roared, the waves hissed, and there were

terrific peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, accompanied by heavy rain. The ship looked a mere toy-boat on the tumultuous waves, which danced a pandemoniac dance round about and sometimes over her, to the dismay of her skipper. The hurricane-deck had been washed again and again by the infuriated billows, and a poor lascar, who had been doing duty, was washed away from it, to be found no more. Never before had the ship encountered a storm so fierce. She lurched and tossed and squeaked, bewailing the inequality of the contest. Rustim lay stretched on his berth sea-sick. Oh! that illness. He never forgot it all his life. His head swam, and his heart threatened to leap out of his mouth. See-saw went the ship, and he felt he was going down to the bottom of the sea with his head downwards. He clutched at his berth in agony, but up he came to the surface in a twinkling with his legs upwards, and rolled hither and thither, backward and forward like a ball on the cricket ground. He experienced a hateful sensation, and in the agony of the moment even wished the ship would sink. For ten long hours the storm raged unrelentingly. The wind howled most dismally, and the incessant peals of thunder surpassed the boom of the united artilleries of England, Japan and America. The lightning

was most vivid, and shed its gruesome lustre on the sombre waves of the tempestuous sea. The whole spectacle was most awe-inspiring.

The next day was bright and clear, except for a gale, which upset a few lady passengers. The deck, which had been deserted on the previous day, was again crowded, and the absorbing topic of the day was the tempest. The Captain was complimented on his prowess, and he, in his turn, praised his officers and crew, and expressed his deep grief at the loss of the lascar, who had been engulfed in the sea on the night previous.

“The lascars, sir, are brave sailors and are inferior to none in valour,” said the Captain, reprovably, to Mr. Polemic Popgun, who had doubted the prowess of the lascars.

The day wore on. At dusk the gale blew stronger, and another storm was feared. The rain came down, at first in drizzle, and then in torrents. The night was murky, and the passengers retired to their cabins much earlier than usual.

Aden was reached at 8 o'clock the next morning. “Have a dive, Oh! Oh! Have a dive, Oh! Oh!” yelled a dozen almost nude

Somali boys, who rolled like porpoises on the surface of the water. A few silver coins were thrown into the sea by some passengers, which these boys brought out with remarkable agility, and yelled "Have a dive, Oh! Oh!" more frantically than before. A more adventurous boy scaled the ship on the sly, and coaxed Rustim to throw a coin into the water, which Rustim did to the delight of the boy, who jumped into the sea from the larboard side of the hurricane-deck, and brought up the coin grinning. That boy's brother had been devoured by an alligator only a week previous, but he philosophically attributed the mishap to Divine displeasure.

Two passengers boarded the ship at Aden—Major Flapdoodle Spooney of the 7th Light Infantry and the Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy. Major Spooney was tall, well-built and attractive, but psychologists averred that his brain had not developed in proportion to his body. His great failing was his intense love for the fair sex, whom he adored vehemently, and never felt happier than when he was in their company. He was therefore disappointed at the paucity of their number on board, and consoled himself by holding a tête-à-tête alternately with whisky and soda and a plump lady in black silk, who

was the relict of a tea-planter, who had been accidentally drowned.

The Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy had a sleek face and a corpulent body, which betokened good living on his part. He was an amiable gentleman, but was rather tainted with the vice of bigotry and self-adulation. He narrated to the passengers over and over again his exploits in India and the conversion of ten starving pariahs to Christianity at one time, which he considered the best achievement of his evangelic career. The pariahs were hungry and he fed them, who, in return for it, embraced Christianity without knowing its principles. They imagined Christ to be a god reigning in some snowy region, and the Rev. Mr. Puffy his plenipotentiary in India. They mixed up Christ with their old god, and worshipped his image and the Cross as they once worshipped the image of their old god. Still, they were the trophies of Mr. Puffy's evangelical success.

Seeing Rustim, Mr. Puffy resolved to mesh him into his snare. It was a source of very great disappointment to him that, during his seven years' sojourn in India, he had not succeeded in proselytizing a single Indian of birth or education. The high-caste Indians had always repelled his overtures, and he had

given them up in despair long since. The desire now re-kindled in his breast, and he set to work for Rustim's conversion.

"I mustn't flutter the bird," said he to himself, and thrummed on the arm of his chair the air "Gently, gently, gently does the trick," with vigour and animation. He tried to ingratiate himself into Rustim's favour, talked more with him than with any other passenger, admired his manners, complimented him on his education, and pretended to feel interested in all that concerned him. About two days afterwards, when he felt sure of his ground, he broached the subject of Christianity to Rustim.

"Do you know this book, my friend?" said he to Rustim, looking up from the Holy Bible, which he was reading on purpose then.

"Yes, it is the Bible," replied Rustim.

"Have you read it?"

"Yes."

"I am delighted to hear it. Isn't it a wonderful book?"

"It is, certainly."

"What do you think of Jesus Christ?"



“He was a great prophet, and lived a most noble and spotless life.”

“Ah! I see that you are a Christian at heart. Allow me to congratulate you. Did not Jesus suffer for our sins, and are not our sins washed in His blood?”

“I am not a Christian, sir.”

“You surprise me. Jesus is the only Son of God, and there can be no salvation but through Him.”

“I am not inclined to share your belief, Mr. Puffy. To my mind, all religions are equally good, equally ennobling, and are founded on faith. I would not forsake mine, nor would I ask anybody to forsake his.”

“It is profane to speak of Christianity in the same breath with other religions. Christianity is the only true religion revealed to men by God. Is it not so said in the Bible?”

“I have very great respect for the Bible, but I cannot overlook what has been said in other religious books. Does not every religion claim to be the only true religion revealed to men by God?”

“All other religions are frauds.”

“I am sorry that you should speak ill of them.”

“I like to call a spade a spade, my friend. Christianity is the only armour against ignorance, vice and misery.”

“Other religions make equally good armours for that purpose.”

“I do not agree with you. I cannot agree with you. Look at the civilizing influence of Christianity. It has dispelled darkness from the world, and has brought peace, happiness and contentment to it. It is both a lever and a leveller, as I have always called it. It has uplifted mankind from darkness, and rased to the ground social barriers. It knows no Brahmins and Sudras, as there are among Hindus.”

“There may be no Brahmins and Sudras as recognized classes among Christians, but they exist among them all the same. A handful of Indians have been allured to embrace Christianity by rosy pictures depicted to them by Missionaries, but they have found the barrier, which existed between them and the Europeans in India to continue even after their conversion. Religion is always in the

background. Colour of the skin is the crucial test. It is moonshine to say that Christianity is a leveller of social barriers."

"My friend, you are hard upon Missionaries. Have they not done good work in India?"

"Yes, they have. I am ready to give them their due. But they have over-exaggerated the beneficence of their work and have misjudged the sphere of their action. They have founded a few schools and colleges, and have brought up some neglected orphans. They have done this to promote proselytism. A selfish object, no doubt. Still they deserve praise. But I think a much nobler and a grander mission than this they should embark upon. A conversion of a few pariahs and waifs and strays in India may rejoice their hearts, but it does not accomplish any substantial good. They ought to set to themselves the task of converting some of their own countrymen, who are only Christians in name. Let them wage a crusade against the unrighteous distinction, which many of their countrymen in India make towards the Indians. Let them throw the weight of their influence against the unjust, inhuman and brutal conduct of their countrymen towards the coloured people of Africa. May they preach the Gospel of Christ to such

of their own people as have forgotten their God, their religion, and all human virtues in the scrimmage for wealth. Mammon is the God of such people; and, although they call themselves Christians, they have slain thousands and robbed millions of unoffending coloured people in Africa, Australia and America in the name of civilization. Is this Christianity? ”

“There is some force in what you say. But we are deviating from the main point. I am anxious for your salvation. The crown of glory is within your reach. Seize it instantly, my friend. Oh! what a great Saviour is Christ, and what a heritage it is to follow His banner! Would that you realize it! Men are sinners, and Christ suffered on the Cross of Calvary for their sake.”

“I feel very much obliged to you for your solicitude for me. But to my mind, salvation can be best attained by good thoughts, good words and good deeds.”

“Ah! my friend, you are misguided. Our sins can only be washed in the blood of Christ. Accept Christ as your Saviour.” So saying, the Rev. Mr. Puffy rolled up his eyes, and sang vociferously:—

“Oh! touch the hem of His garment and thou too shalt be free.

His saving power this very hour will give new life to thee.”

This sudden ebullition of religious fervour attracted the attention of those who were on the deck.

"Puffy is a d——d humbug," observed Mr. Magnus Myope to his friend Mr. Numskull Firebrand. Whereupon that gentleman drawled out "Puffy is an egregious ass to waste his breath on a deuced nigger."

Mr. and Mrs. Upright, who were good Christians, were in favour of mission-work in India, but they considered Mr. Puffy to be indiscreet and pestiferous. Major Flapdoodle Spooney, taking advantage of this commotion, pressed the hand of the lady in black silk and attempted to steal a kiss from her, which she resented. There was an old lady passenger in white cap, who, delighted at the zeal of Mr. Puffy and his method of preaching the Gospel, walked up to him briskly and congratulated him, and promised a donation of £10 to the Asian Mission, at which Mr. Puffy puffed tremendously and said melodramatically: "Madam, I am but a humble servant of my Divine Master, and am resolved to sacrifice myself in His service. Whether I am awake or asleep, whether it is winter or summer, autumn or spring, day time or night time, I shall preach, undaunted by the scoffs and

jeers of the pharisees and traducees, the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, the Redeemer of mankind, to the benighted heathens of India."

The old lady went into ecstasy at the eloquence and versatility of Mr. Puffy, for she had never heard of a man preaching the Gospel in his sleep. She, however doubled her donation, feeling satisfied in the recesses of her simple heart that she had done her duty. Mr. Puffy looked upon this incident as a crowning piece to his evangelic career, and resolved to describe it at a meeting, which he intended to address at Exeter Hall under the auspices of the National Christian Association soon after his arrival in London. When Mr. Puffy was picturing to himself the thunder of applauses and the waving of handkerchiefs, which, he imagined, would follow the narration of this incident, Rustim stole away from his side.

The Rev. Mr. Puffy was obstreperous, if anything. He mistook clamorous importunity for zeal, and badgered poor Rustim with fulminating discourses and lectures on Christianity. Suez was passed, and Port Said was reached. Finding Rustim impervious, Mr. Puffy gave him up as past redemption, and prophesied a

most uncomfortable place for him in the other world.

At Port Said the ship replenished her bunkers with coal, and the deck was covered with coal-dust. Rustim stood at the gangway to have a view of the town, which did not please him much. Two ladies came up the ladder. Both were brunettes and really very charming. At the sight of them, Major Spooney was pierced to the heart. He fancied himself in love with the one, then with the other, and then with both. They resembled each other remarkably, and looked like twin-sisters, rather than mother and daughter, which they were. They belonged to the great Warbler family, and were returning home after a visit to Cairo and other places in Egypt. Major Spooney was grieved to learn that one of them was a married woman, who had her husband living, and that the other was the fiancé of a distinguished barrister. He envied both the husband and the barrister, and wished that he was either the one or the other. He, however, took a long pull at his glass of whisky and soda, and resigned himself to the lady in black silk.

Mrs. Warbler and her daughter were as amiable and good-natured as they were

attractive. They mixed with all the passengers with that amount of freedom which bespoke high-breeding on their part, and augmented their popularity without detracting from their natural grace and dignity. They were very kind to Rustim, and asked him questions about India and her people. This vexed Mr. Numskull Firebrand and his distinguished friends, who always pretended to know more about the Indians than the Indians themselves. However, their vexation soon disappeared, as Mrs. Warbler and her daughter conversed with them vivaciously. The two ladies were declared to be highly accomplished and charming, and all those who were on board were eager to bask in the sunshine of their company. Sir Grasping Grabber regretted that they did not join the ship at an earlier stage of the voyage, and all concurred in his opinion. There was mirth and laughter, and an exchange of piquant remarks and witty sallies all day long. At night Sir Grasping Grabber, who had become hilarious by drinking more port than he usually did, proposed music. Mr. Numskull Firebrand seconded the proposition, and Mr. Magnus Myope supported it. Major Spooney, in the hope of securing an opportunity to kiss the ladies, suggested a game of forfeits. For want of a seconder the



suggestion fell through. The Rev. Mr. Puffy was in favour of singing hymns, but none approved of his proposal except the old lady in the white cap, who heaved a sigh of regret at its unceremonious rejection. The original proposition having been declared carried by an overwhelming majority, Sir Grasping Grabber called upon Mrs. Warbler for a song. "Hear, hear," shouted Mr. Numskull Firebrand. "Mrs. Warbler for a song," echoed Major Spooney, and re-echoed Mr. Polemic Popgun. Sir Grasping Grabber led Mrs. Warbler to the piano, and made a chivalrous bow to her before withdrawing. Mr. Upright played accompaniment for her, and she sang exquisitely. Her voice was rich and melodious and spell-bound the audience. The finale was simply grand, and Mrs. Warbler resumed her seat amidst applause.

"It is now a gent's turn," said the lady in black silk. The choice unanimously fell upon Major Spooney, who sang "Queen of my Heart to-night," with very great effect and suggestive glances at the lady in black silk, who blushed to the tips of her ears.

"Spooney has gone mad over that girl," said Mr. Magnus Myope to Mr. Bungling Blowhard.

“We can have a wedding on board. There is a parson at hand, and you can be the bestman,” replied Mr. Blowhard. Upon this both gentlemen laughed, Mr. Blowhard feeling elated at his own joke. The lady in black silk was called upon next. She pleaded a sore throat, and begged to be excused. However, she relented upon being pressed by all, and sang “Does your Heart beat true to me, my love,” in a capital style. When she resumed her seat, Major Spooney whispered to her “Yes, darling, my heart does beat true to thee.” Whereupon the lady’s heart fluttered, but she asked him not to be silly.

Sir Grasping Grabber sang “Tom Bowling” with the pomposity which became an ex-member of the Council of the Viceroy of India. Mr. Numskull Firebrand fired off “Monte Carlo” in a blazing style, and Mr. Polemic Popgun sang a comic song, which moved to laughter none but himself. Mr. Bungling Blowhard, not being a singer at all, was permitted to dance his favourite hornpipe. He bungled a great deal, and cut antics which mystified the audience. The audience, however, being in a very good humour, encored him, and Mr. Blowhard, taking it at its word, started afresh until he blew like a pair of bellows.

“Miss Warbler will now oblige the company,” said Mr. Upright. “Hear, hear,” shouted three or four voices simultaneously.

Miss Warbler sang “Home Sweet Home” in a sweet, musical voice, which equalled, if not surpassed, her mother’s. Her voice had a peculiar tremor, which enhanced its worth materially. She was a born singer, and all were delighted to hear her.

“It is now my turn to call. I call upon our Indian friend,” said Miss Warbler, who, being unused to Indian names, had forgotten Rustim’s. Poor Rustim was thunder-struck. He had never sung before a larger audience than his family circle. Besides, he was now in the midst of Britishers, some of whom were really good singers, and blushed like a maiden of seventeen when spoken to about love. Mrs. Warbler, noticing his perplexity, encouragingly put her arm into his, and walked with him to the piano to play accompaniment for him. He sang “Father O’Flynn.” He was a good tenor, and, although he betrayed nervousness, he sang remarkably well. Both Mrs. and Miss Warbler were delighted at his singing, and advised him to take lessons in music, saying that he had a lovely voice, which needed training.

Other singers followed Rustim, some of whom sang patriotic and others sentimental songs, the whole company joining in the choruses. The evening was spent very agreeably, and the company broke up in the liveliest humour imaginable.

The following days passed off pleasantly. Sir Grasping Grabber and the other distinguished magnates of India relaxed considerably, and talked to Rustim affably. This sudden change of demeanour on their part surprised Rustim. He did not know whether to ascribe it to the good example of the Warblers and the Uprights, or to the pure ozone of the Mediterranean Sea, which, unlike the Eastern waters, was unimpregnated with the deleterious nitrogen of racial prejudices. He was more inclined to the latter view.

A good example is as infectious as a bad one, and the virtues and vices of great men are equally imitated by the multitudes. The less distinguished passengers, who had hitherto held themselves aloof from Rustim, soon caught the infection of the good example of the aforementioned great persons, and mixed with Rustim freely.

Brindisi was reached. Most of the passengers, including Rustim, disembarked at that port, with a view to proceed to London by the overland route. Major Spooney congratulated his good fortune that the lady in black silk was bound for London all the way by sea, as himself.

Rustim took leave of the Rev. Mr. Puffy, who imparted to him a parting admonition to know Christ, and urged him to become a member of the National Christian Association, which, he said, was the next best institution to the Asian Mission in the British Isles.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE BOARDING HOUSE IN BEDFORD  
PLACE.

## MAJOR SPOONEY'S WEDDING.

RUSTIM put up in a boarding-house in Bedford Place, Russell Square, London. Its owner was a stout lady, who had evidently seen better days at one time. She had only one child—a daughter about twenty-five years old—whose great ambition in life was to get married. The young lady was ever ready to give away her heart, her person and her purse, which was very slender, to any one of the half-a-dozen gentlemen, who lived under her mother's hospitable roof. There were three lady boarders, two of whom were hoity-toity and read sensational novels almost all day long. The third was an adventuress. She set her cap at a rakish-looking dandy, who had been in the house for about a fortnight, and was flush of money. The flirtations between them thrived, and serious consequences might have ensued, had she not discovered in time that he had a wife in

Canada. He accidentally dropped a letter in the hall which she picked up and read surreptitiously. It was from his wife, begging him to return to her. There was a scene between the two, and he left the house abruptly on the day on which Rustim arrived there. The lady, whose name was Letitia Catchman, did not care two straws for the man, whom she had not loved at all, but was very much upset in mind that she could not hope to recover a solatium for her supposed wounded feelings.

“You have no case, Miss Catchman. Even the most emotional jurymen in England would not award you damages on such flimsy evidence,” said her solicitor, Mr. Jones, to her.

She secretly reproached herself for not playing her game more adroitly than she had done and not taking into her confidence the two lady boarders and the genial mistress of the boarding-house and her amiable daughter. “O! Mr. Jones, that man is a wretch, a villain and an imposter,” whimpered she.

“That may be, but there must be evidence, direct or circumstantial, to bring home to him his moral delinquency,” observed Mr. Jones.

At this she whimpered again, gave vent to further invectives, with which her vocabulary was replete, and retired from the solicitor's office, very much vexed with herself at being unable to accomplish her object. She went home, and threw herself on a sofa in the parlour, musing.

'Rap, tap, tap' went the knocker on the door, and a pretty servant-girl in a white cap and a white apron tripped up to it from the subterranean regions of the house.

"Are apartments to let?" inquired a tall gentleman in a frock-coat and silk hat of the servant-girl, who had opened the door partially.

"Yes, sir. Will you step in, please? Missus has gone out, but will be in directly." So saying, she led him into the parlour, and Miss Catchman started up on seeing him.

"I'm sorry to have disturbed you, lady," said the gentleman with a respectful bow.

"Oh! no. Pray, be seated," said Miss Catchman, inclining her head a little in acknowledgment of the bow.

The tall gentleman was no other than Major Flapdoodle Spooner, who had arrived



in London only a day previous, and had put up at the Inns of Court Hotel in Holborn. He was much struck by the appearance of Miss Catchman, who had a fair complexion, dark eyes, raven hair and a voluptuous figure. As his eyes were feasting upon her beauty, the handle of the door of the parlour was turned, and in came Rustim.

“Hullo, are you here? I am delighted to see you,” said Major Spooney to Rustim.

“So am I, Major. How are you?”

“First rate, thanks.”

“How did you find the Bay of Biscay?”

“Awful. I had never found the Bay so very boisterous before. All the passengers except me became sick. Puffy amused me a lot. He lay prostrate in his bed singing hallelujah. That fellow is a maniac.”

At this juncture, the proprietress of the house entered the parlour, and curtseying, led the Major up a flight of stairs to show him two rooms which had been lately in the occupation of the rakish-looking dandy. The Major liked them, and promising to return with his baggage within an hour, went away.

A Major in the service of her late Majesty .  
was not a small mortal in the eyes of the  
denizens of Bedford Place.

“Oh, Lor’, Ma !” ejaculated the heiress of  
the house to her mother upon being apprised  
of the position of the new-comer. She mused  
that it was quite within the range of pro-  
babilities for the Major to fall in love with her,  
for had not a judge married his own cook ?

The two volatile lady boarders giggled  
more heartily than ever before at the prospect  
of the flirtations, which they hoped to carry on  
with the Major, and Miss Catchman resolved  
to make a fierce onslaught on him with her  
bewitching eyes and fascinating manners.

“I must be very careful this time, though.  
It won’t do to catch a Tartar again,” she  
soliloquized.

The Major arrived with his baggage  
punctually, and soon became a favourite with  
the inmates of the house.

Within three weeks of his arrival in the  
boarding-house, Major Spooner clean forgot  
the plump lady in black silk, and succumbed  
to the charms of Miss Catchman, who inveigled  
him in her meshes with the same dexterity as

the spider inveigles the fly. He was completely infatuated with her, and his passions were aroused. One night, while driving home from the Vauderville after witnessing "Joseph's Sweet Heart," he became overpowered by her charms, and showered a volley of kisses on her cheeks and forehead, encircling his arm round her waist.

"Oh! don't, Major. It is highly improper. I'll shout to the cabby to pull up." So saying, Miss Catchman, feigning resentment, shook off Major Spooney's arm from her waist.

"I'm sorry to have given you offence. Forgive me. You don't know how much I love you. Be mine, dear Letitia. Say that you love me. I can't live——"

When the Major was thus in the midst of his declaration of love, the cab pulled up at the door of the boarding-house. Major Spooney alighted, and Miss Catchman tripped out after him before he could offer his hand to her. The door having been opened with a latch-key by the Major, Miss Catchman entered the house, and, taking a candle-stick off the table in the hall, flew up the staircase, saying "Good-night, Major."

Major Spooney was flabbergasted, and going up into his room threw himself on his bed, bewailing his ill-luck. He lay awake till the small hours of the morning, when he made up his mind to make another effort to besiege the heart of Miss Catchman.

"Try again shall be my motto," said he to himself.

He then undressed, and went to sleep, dreaming of the rosy cheeks and carmine lips of his beloved.

Miss Catchman, on gaining her room, was delighted with the excellence of her acting. She knew the Major too well to act otherwise.

"Spooney is head over ears in love with me. He'll be down on his knees to-morrow as sure as my name is Letitia Catchman," mused she, undoing her luxuriant jet-black hair before a mirror, and admiring her own reflection in it. She went to bed without the least trepidation of heart.

Major Spooney was awakened from his sleep next morning by the breakfast-bell, but he did not stir out of the bed, and lay in it

thinking as to how he should best assail Miss Catchman's heart. First, he thought of writing a billet-doux to her, but dismissed that idea from his mind as not sufficiently attractive, and resolved to pour forth his heart to her in a pithy and sentimental address. He chose one expression, but rejected it as of a vulgar sort; chose another, and threw it overboard as not sufficiently impressive; and thus he went on choosing one and then another until he found himself in a labyrinth of perplexity. At length, he hit upon what he thought to be a happy comparison. He had learnt in his school-days that Queen Mary of England had said that if her heart was ripped open the word 'Calais' would be found engraven on it.

• Similarly, he would tell his beloved that if his heart was opened the word 'Letitia Catchman' would be found engraven on it in bold letters. This happy comparison he interlarded with the words 'ducky, darling, cherub and seraph,' which, though as old as Adam, have not lost their charm for lovers. He then thought of the *Kohinoor*, and interlarded that too in his panegyric of Miss Catchman. At length, he was satisfied with his powder and shot, and at 11 o'clock in the forenoon descended to the parlour determined to lay siege to Miss Catchman's heart at the earliest opportunity.

Finding nobody in the parlour, he touched the bell and the servant-girl appeared.

"Mary, my breakfast please," said the Major to her. "Oh! sir, you're late. Missus couldn't think whate'er was the matter with you. You're always as punctual as clock-work. Missus 'as gone out marketing, Miss Catchman to the Post and the other young ladies to the Park," replied Mary.

"You pretty chatter-box. Hurry up with the breakfast," rejoined the Major.

"Lor'! Major, you do say things," smirked Mary, tossing up her head a little, and then withdrew.

"England is the land of beauty, and her lasses are the finest in the world," reflected Major Spooney.

Miss Catchman returned from the Post Office in the meantime, and Major Spooney bade her good-morning, congratulating himself upon his good luck at having received such an early and favourable opportunity to urge his suit. Miss Catchman returned the salutation rather frigidly, and sat down at a table to write a letter.



“ Seeing this, Mary screamed and dropped the tray, smashing the crockery, spilling the coffee, and staining the almost new brussels-carpet on the floor with the grease of bacon and broken eggs.”

[See p. 51.]





" Seeing this, Mary screamed and dropped the  
the crockery, spilling the coffee, and scolding  
new brussels-carpet on the floor with the



Major Spooney stole up to her side, and falling upon his knees said:—"Disdain me not, dear Letitia. I love you more dearly than words can tell. Cut open my heart this instant, and you'll find 'Queen Mary' engraved upon it—Oh! I mean 'Calais'—I beg your pardon, I mean the words 'Letitia Catchman' would be found engraven upon the tablet of my heart. Oh! love me. Do love me. I can't live without you, darling. Oh, my Angel! say that you'll be mine."

Miss Catchman affected annoyance at first, then gradually softened, and Major Spooney rose to his feet an accepted lover. They were soon in each other's arms, and as Major Spooney was imprinting kisses on her cheeks, Mary entered with a tray in her hands. Seeing this, Mary screamed and dropped the tray, smashing the crockery, spilling the coffee and staining the almost new brussels-carpet on the floor with the grease of bacon and broken eggs.

"Boohoo, boohoo. Missus will fly into a rage. What shall I do?" cried Mary.

"You lazy, lolloping, lumpy thing! What's all this? You have spoilt my beautiful carpet and smashed my china," exclaimed the

mistress of the house, who happened to return from the market that instant.

“Oh Ma’am! it wasn’t my fault. I couldn’t help it, Ma’am,” whimpered Mary.

“You impertinent hussy. How dare you talk like that?” said the mistress in an angry tone.

“Oh Ma’am! it wasn’t my fault. Major put his arm round—boohoo, boohoo—and kissed—boohoo, boohoo.”

“I see, the Major put his arm round you and kissed you. A pretty state of affairs in my absence.”

Then turning to the Major, she said: “It’s abominable. I’m shocked at you. This is a respectable house, Major, and such conduct will not be tolerated here. I tell you again, sir, it won’t be tolerated here.”

“Not me, Ma’am, not me, Ma’am. I wouldn’t do such a thing, Ma’am. It was Miss Catchman that Major kissed,” sobbed Mary.

At this stage Major Spooney interposed, saying “Madam, I am engaged to Miss Catchman, and when I was—hem—Mary opened the door and—”

• “And peeped in,” added the landlady hurriedly. “She’s a sly cat, and sneaks in where not wanted. That she always does, and no mistake, Major.”

Then wheeling round as quickly as her fat body would allow her, she said to Mary imperiously “You minx, pick up the things and begone.”

• “You are rather hasty, Mrs. Smith. Mary is not to blame,” said the Major to his landlady and proceeded to give her an explanation, which satisfied her completely, as it was accompanied by an offer to indemnify her.

“My congratulations to Major Spooney and Miss Catchman,” said the landlady, who without waiting to hear their reply, hurried to the kitchen to order another breakfast for Major Spooney.

Within half-an-hour the breakfast was laid on the table, and Major Spooney was half way through it when Rustim came in from a walk.

“Good morning, Major. You are very late. It’s almost time for lunch,” said Rustim.

“Good morning,” replied the Major, plunging his fork into a rasher of bacon and cutting a piece off it with surgical dexterity.

Mrs. Smith told Rustim of what had happened, congratulated Major Spooney and Miss Catchman again, and praised the Major for his kind offer to make good her loss.

Rustim played the hypocrite, and congratulated the Major and his lady-love, although he felt genuinely sorry for the Major, who, he thought, was good-natured, and had fallen into the snare of a siren.

The young ladies arrived, and Mrs. Smith described the adventure again, and told them of the engagement, upon which two of them giggled and nudged each other, and the third lady, who was no other than the heiress of the house, felt a pang of regret, for she had secretly hoped that the Major might throw himself at her feet one day. However, she soon regained her sprightliness, and chatted as loquaciously as ever.

The same day Major Spooney bought a hoop-ring set with diamonds and rubies from a swell shop in Oxford Street, and slipped it on the finger of Miss Catchman. The ring was a handsome one and evoked the admiration of all.

• “I cannot stay in this house any longer. Either you or I must go out of it,” said Miss Catchman to Major Spooney the next day when they found themselves alone in the parlour.

“Why ? ” inquired the Major.

• “Because it won’t be right for us to stay under the same roof, now that we are engaged.”

Major Spooney thought Miss Catchman to be a paragon of virtue, kissed her, and promised to do as she bade. He then went to reside with his friend Mr. Polemic Popgun at Earl’s Court until his wedding.

The wedding came on in the first week of November. The weather was most unpropitious, and London was enshrouded in a pall of dense fog. Rustim looked upon it as a precursor of evil and murmured “Poor Major! May I prove a false prophet, but that woman will be the plague of your life.”

“Whate’er is the matter with you this morning? You don’t seem bright,” said Mrs. Smith tapping Rustim on his shoulder.

“He is in love—” interposed a gentleman boarder mischievously.

“ You wicked man ! I’m old enough to be his mother. But I tell you, Mr. Jeffreys, there was a time when I was reckoned a beauty in the whole of Chelmsford.”

At this the two lady boarders giggled. But Mrs. Smith, without heeding them, proceeded “ My poor John ! he always said ‘ Lucy ! you are the loveliest girl in the whole of Christendom. There is no girl like you.’ ” At this the two young ladies giggled more heartily than before, and Mrs. Smith, who was inclined to make a retrospect of her wooing-days, was put out.

“ Mrs. Smith,” ejaculated Rustim, “ I was thinking of the weather. What a weather—”

“ Ah ! this wretched weather has upset you. You are thinking of your Indian sunshine.”

“ It isn’t that. I was about to say what a weather this is for a wedding-day. I feel a sort of misgiving about Major’s—”

“ Major’s felicity you mean. You’re a superstitious man. You Indians are. Don’t be croaking,” said Mrs. Smith reproachfully.

“ I am inclined to share in Mr. Rustim’s prognostication,” observed Miss Smith.

“ Fie ! child,” exclaimed Mrs. Smith.

• “Bad weather like this on a wedding-day isn’t a good sign, Ma. I have read of it in a book.”

“Don’t stuff your head with nonsense, child!”

Mrs. Smith was about to be didactic, when it was found that it was time to dress for the wedding.

The wedding was a very quiet affair. The two young ladies acted as bridesmaids, and a gentleman from Colchester who was the uncle of Miss Catchman gave her away. Mr. Polemic Popgun acted as bestman. Rustim was present in the Church of St. Andrews in Holborn, to witness the nuptials. That was the first English wedding he had attended. He was very much pleased with the solemnity and simplicity of the service, and was amused at some ladies throwing rice at the bride and bridegroom as they walked down the aisle, and Miss Smith throwing an old shoe behind the carriage-and-pair in which they drove away from the Church. Rustim was struck with the similarity and contrariety of this usage with that prevailing among his own people. Rice is an emblem of good omen, and is thrown at brides and bridegrooms in India, but not old shoes, which it would be an unpardonable affront to throw at or behind them.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE MIDDLE TEMPLE.

RUSTIM had not provided himself with letters of introduction from India. He, therefore, felt perplexed when asked by the clerk in the office of the Middle Temple to produce a certificate from a barrister prior to his admission. He thought of the Warblers, and went to them. Miss Warbler very kindly introduced him to her fiancé, who was an exceedingly courteous gentleman and who wrote out a certificate and otherwise put him in the way. The Michaelmas Term did not commence till the 2nd of November, and Rustim had full two months before him to while away. He made the best use of that time in sight-seeing and reading at the Middle Temple Library, which was splendidly equipped with books and nicely situated, commanding a view of the Thames and the Temple Gardens. Here he read regularly during the three years he was in England—Sundays and a few holidays excepted.



- Contiguous to the Library there is the Common Room of the Temple, of which Rustim made ample use. He usually lunched there, for which he was charged very moderately, played chess, wrote his correspondence, read newspapers and magazines, and said that he never had a more handsome return for a modest subscription of half-a-guinea a year.

On the very first day of the Term Rustim dined in the magnificent Hall of the Temple. He had to keep twelve terms and eat six dinners at least in each term. The dinner commenced at 6 o'clock in the evening. A short time before it, barristers and students in their gowns sat down at tables, which were in rows parallel to one another, forming themselves into messes of four each. At the stroke of six, the beadle heralded the Benchers by striking his mace on the floor. The barristers and students rose to their feet, and kept standing until the Benchers filed past in pairs to their table at the farthest end of the Hall. The beadle knocked his mace again, and the Treasurer of the Temple, who was one of the Benchers, said grace. The diners resuming their seats, the dinner was served. It was an old-fashioned repast, but was substantial and cheap for 2 shillings. Ale was supplied freely, but wines in

a limited quantity. Each mess was given the option to select a wine from a variety—champagne, mozelle, port, sherry, burgundy and sauterne being the principal wines. A short time after the dinner was begun, the beadle shouted out in a stentorian voice “Gentlemen, please charge your glasses.” After this, the Treasurer proposed the toast of the Queen, and the company drank her health, some of them vociferating “the Queen, the Queen.” After the dinner was over, the Benchers left the Hall in pairs, the beadle leading with the mace in his hand. The company stood as they walked past, and demonstrated their esteem for such of them as were popular with them by shouting out their names.

Rustim enjoyed the dinner, and liked the company immensely. Barristers and students sat together at the same mess, without regard to rank, position or seniority, and fraternized with one another harmoniously. Rustim always said that he made more friends at the Temple dinners than elsewhere. He ate his six dinners consecutively, but dined again on the Grand Night, as the Prince of Wales had been invited. Rustim was delighted to see the Prince, whose face beamed with good-nature and kindliness. “The Prince, the Prince,”

shouted the company when his Royal Highness left the Hall after dinner, but none was more enthusiastic in his ovation than Rustim, who was a loyalist to the backbone.

As it was the wont to invite distinguished persons to dinner on Grand Nights, Rustim had made it a point to be present on those nights. There was one Grand Night every term, and the attendance of members was much larger than on ordinary nights. The courses were the same, except that a fowl and an extra bottle of champagne were allowed to each mess. There was also the loving-cup, which was passed round. The cup was capacious, and contained a delicious beverage. A waiter handed the cup to a diner, who stood up, bowed to the gentleman seated diagonally to him, who stood up and returned the bow. The former then drank from the cup, and handed it to the latter, who, in his turn, bowed to the third gentleman of his mess, who stood up and returned the bow, while the second gentleman drank from the cup. Similarly, the third gentleman bowed to the fourth and drank, and the fourth bowed to the first man of the next mess and drank, and so onward went the cup, until it had been sipped from by a hundred lips. Rustim fully appreciated the good object,

which the cup was intended to promote, but considered the practice injurious to health, although the rim of the cup had been wiped off by the waiter every time it had been sipped from.

The Call Night gave equal pleasure to Rustim whose heart always throbbed with delight to behold the newly-fledged barristers radiant with joy, and to conjure up the same picture of happiness for himself.

Rustim attended his lectures regularly, although it was not compulsory to attend them. He found them able and instructive, and the lecturers learned and courteous. He thought it a grievous mistake for a student to neglect those lectures.

## CHAPTER VI.

## A LECTURE AT EXETER HALL.

RUSTIM was out one day for a constitutional. After the day's work he left the precincts of the Temple, and walked down the Strand, to go to St. James' Park, through Pall Mall. As he neared Exeter Hall, his attention was drawn to a placard, announcing that the Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy of the Asian Mission would deliver an address on the Christian Missionaries and Mission Work in India at 4-30 p.m. on that day, the public being cordially invited to it. Rustim pulled a gold hunter out of his pocket, and finding that there were still ten minutes for the lecture to begin, abandoned his constitutional, and walked straight to the Hall. The meeting was held not in the central hall, but in a side room adjacent to it. There were about eighty men and women all told, the ladies being very much in evidence, some of whom sported toques, although it was nearly the middle of November. Exactly at the appointed hour, the chairman of the meeting, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Puffy and other

distinguished persons mounted the platform. The chairman, who was a short-legged gentleman with a large forehead and a chubby nose adorned with gold-rimmed spectacles, commenced the proceedings by a prayer and introduced the lecturer in a few felicitous phrases, and wound up by saying that he did not wish to stand between him and the audience, who, he dared say, was very eager to hear him. He then called upon the Rev. Mr. Puffy, who looked every inch a cleric in his frock-coat, stiff collar and black bow.

Mr. Puffy then rose, puffed, bowed, then puffed again, and said: "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Exactly this day seven years ago I left this country for India, imbued with a desire to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the people of that country. Prior to my departure, it had been bruited about by some calumnious persons that I had selected India, instead of the interior of Africa, for evangelical work, because I did not wish to perish in the insalubrious climate of Africa. I said then and say now that that was a calumny. (Hear, hear.) I was not afraid of death, nor of being devoured raw by some cannibals. (At this stage a middle-aged lady almost fainted, but soon revived at the pluck of Mr. Puffy.)

I should have faced grim death with fortitude and preached the Gospel even while being roasted alive over a crackling fire. ("Dear me!" ejaculated a lady in a smart bonnet.) Aye, I should have urged upon those orgies to renounce their heathenish ways, and embrace Christianity. (Hear, hear.) Brethren and sisters, I selected India rather than Africa, not because I was afraid of death, privation or misery, but because I thought that India had a prior claim upon my humble services. A friend of mine, who had considerable experience of that country, said to me one day, 'Behold! India is a most lustrous jewel in the Crown of England, and its population of three hundred millions are our fellow-subjects. Still, they are heathens and we have done nothing for their salvation.' I felt the justice of the reproach and resolved to proceed to India. That was the reason which guided my steps to that country, and I defy any one to say that I was wrong in my choice. (Cries of "No, no.")

Brethren and sisters, during my stay of six years and eight months in India, I mixed with all sorts and varieties of people, from the richest jagirdar to the humblest peasant, and I found that a more intelligent, industrious, law-abiding and docile people never existed

upon God's earth. (Hear, hear.) It has been repeatedly said that India has been won by the sword, and India shall be retained by the sword. It is a fallacy to say so. India cannot be retained by the sword any more than its river Ganges can be swam through from the source to the mouth in one day. The only way, the true way and the best way to retain India is to spread Christianity throughout its length and breadth. (Cheers.)

Brethren and sisters, while speaking about the Mission-work in India, I shall be obliged to say something about myself. Nothing can be more distasteful to me than that, and I should have gladly avoided any reference to myself, but I loomed so very largely in the firmament of the Asian Mission that I could not drop myself out of it any more than I could drop the sun from the firmament of Heaven, while speaking about the solar system. (A voice: "Don't be modest, go on," and cries of "Hear, hear.")

At times out of number I was obliged to travel in a bullock-cart or on horseback to outlandish districts, miles and miles away from railway stations and centres of civilization. For months I could not get to eat rump-steak or mutton-chop as Hindus would not slaughter



animals, and was obliged to exist as best as I could on broiled chickens and boiled eggs. ("Awful!" grunted a rump-steak faced gentleman, who thought beef and mutton to be an absolute necessity for human existence.) There were no gooseberry-pies and apple-tarts, and I was obliged to content myself with roly-poly or batter-pudding. I could get plantains, but not strawberry or peaches—not even Bombay mangoes or Poona figs. ("What a hardship!") A lady has exclaimed sympathetically that it was a hardship. Yes, it was a hardship (hear, hear); but I was determined to bear any suffering rather than give up the campaign that I had set my heart upon. (Cheers.)

The campaign was not barren of victory. (Cheers.) I can but give only a few instances. There was a waif, who being a low-caste man, was shunned by his countrymen. (Shame.) I resolved to bring him to the fold of Christ, and he was converted. (Cheers.) I paid him Rs. 50 and set him up in business. He is now a baker in a small way, and makes quite a guinea a month. ("That is a starvation wage. There ought to be Trades Unions in India," shouted out a gentleman, who belonged to the working-class.) A gentleman has called a

guinea a month a starvation wage. But that sum is not to be despised in a country, where the average income of the head of a family does not exceed 3d. a day. (Cheers.)

I will give another instance. A poor wretch was lying seriously ill in an out-of-the-way place, nobody attending on him. There was no doctor in the place, and I doctored him and nursed him until he fully recovered. (Applause.) The poor man was laid up with fever and diarrhœa. The fever was very high. I gave him an overdose of phenacetin, and the fever abated at once. But his pulse beat feeble and his heart grew weak; so I gave him brandy and digitalis in large quantities. The pulse improved and the heart improved. Unfortunately, the diarrhœa became worse on account of the large quantity of brandy that he had swallowed. I gave him bismuth and tincture opii, with the result that the diarrhœa was stopped and constipation followed. I, therefore, gave him magnesia sulphate, which had the desired effect. He then complained of cramps and pain in the chest. I applied mustard plaster and linseed poultice. He recovered, and was touched with my kindness and became a Christian at my persuasion. (Cheers.)

I will give a third instance. A Surti butler in the service of a European fell in love with a Mhar ayah. They were Hindus, but belonged to different castes and could not marry each other. (Shame.) They were in a quandary, and appealed to me. I cut the Gordian knot for them by baptizing them, and tied them in the holy bond of matrimony according to Christian rites and ceremonies. (Cheers.)

The fourth illustration is rather sentimental. It was the conversion of ten pariahs at one time. The pariahs were hungry and I fed them; they were almost naked and I clothed them; they were homeless and I housed them. In return for this they accepted Christ as their suzerain. (Cheers.) Never in the annals of the Asian Mission had such a case of wholesale conversion occurred before. (Cheers.) It was a record case, an unprecedented case, an epoch-making case." (Loud cheers.) ("They were ten after all," shouted a surly-looking gentleman.) This made Mr. Puffy very indignant. He put his left hand under the right tail of his coat, and pointing the index-finger of his right hand towards that gentleman continued: "That gentleman on the first bench in the second row seems to

imagine that ten was an insignificant number. Evidently he has not studied sociology, or else he would not have said so. In the course of time, ten would multiply into hundreds, hundreds into thousands, thousands into millions, and millions into billions. (Deafening cheers.) What has that gentleman got to say now, I should like to hear? (The gentleman withered under the fire of Mr. Puffy's eloquence, and there were cries of "Leave him alone" and "Go on.")

Brethren and sisters, it is getting late. I won't detain you longer. (Cries of "Go on, we shall hear you.") Well, I will describe to you what took place on board the ship by which I arrived home. There was a Parsi youth. You have heard about Parsis. They are a very intelligent, enterprising, and to my mind the most advanced race in India, but alas! they are not Christians. (Cries of "Pity!") They are as misguided as the Jews, whom they resemble in more respects than one. They are rich and enterprising, so are the Jews; they have no kings of their own faith, neither have the Jews; they say their prayers with covered heads, so do the Jews; pork is forbidden to them, so is it to the Jews. Well, I thought

an excellent opportunity had arrived for converting a member of that highly cultured race. I considered the presence of that youth on board the ship providential, and spoke to him about Christ and His love for men, feeling certain of dispelling hallucination from his youthful brain. But I was reproached and thwarted in my effort by a servant of the Crown, a man who is in the Civil Service of India and who calls himself a Christian. ("Shame shame," and cries of "Name, name.") I had not the least intention of disclosing his name to you, but I will give it, since you want it. His name is Mr. Constancio Upright, District and Sessions Judge of Contentpore. (Cries of "Shame, shame" and "Report him to the Secretary of State for India.") One day after I had finished discoursing to that young man and he had gone away from me, somewhat nettled at my outspokenness, Mr. Upright came up to me, and asked me if it was not unkind of me to worry that young man, to whom I had talked about Christianity over a dozen times on that day and about an equal number of times on the previous day. Mr. Upright might have experience of felony and misdemeanour, murder and manslaughter, larceny and burglary (laughter), but what did he know of proselytism

and the arduous duties of a missionary? (Hear, hear.) The young man was recalcitrant and his bump of argumentativeness had developed inordinately. What was I to do under the circumstances, but speak, speak and speak until the truth had dawned upon his mind? I therefore told Mr. Upright that his interference was uncalled for, and that I would speak to the young man not once, not twice, but a hundred times and more, for was not freedom of speech the birthright of every true-born Englishman? (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, there was a silvery line in that dismal cloud. There was a lady on board, who appreciated my humble efforts to bring that young Parsi to our fold, and promised a donation of £20 to the Asian Mission. (Cheers.) I rejoice to find that generous lady here (cheers), and am glad to say that the whole amount has been paid by her into the office of the Mission. (Renewed cheers.)

Brethren and sisters, Mahomad of Ghazni invaded India twelve times. He invaded it for its riches. I desire to invade it, with the same frequency also, not for its riches, mind, of which, by the way, there is not much now left in the country, but to carry to its millions of hearths the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth. (Hear

hear.) I want no hirelings and mercenaries and no soldiers of the sword, but only soldiers of the Cross, who would march manfully onward from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas under the banner of the Cross, singing Hallelujah. I appeal to all Christian men and Christian women to rally round the standard and fight the battle of the Cross bravely, nobly and valiantly." So saying, the Rev. Mr. Puffy began, and the audience joined him in singing

"ONWARD, Christian soldiers ! marching as to war,  
Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before.  
Christ, the Royal Master, leads against the foe ;  
Forward into battle see His banners go !

Onward, Christian soldiers ! marching as to war,  
Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before.

At the name of Jesus Satan's host doth flee ;  
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory !  
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise :  
Brothers, lift your voices, loud your anthems raise !

Like a mighty army moves the church of God :  
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.  
We are not divided, all one body we—  
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and  
wane;

But the church of Jesus constant will remain;  
Gates of hell can never 'gainst that church prevail;  
We have Christ's own promise—and that cannot fail;

Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng;  
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph-song:  
“Glory, praise, and honour, unto Christ the King”—  
This through countless ages men and angels sing.”

After the hymn was sung with very great enthusiasm, the Rev. Mr. Puffy resumed his seat in the midst of vociferous cheering.

The Chairman then thanked Mr. Puffy for his able, instructive and interesting lecture, and was thanked, in his turn, by the audience for presiding at the meeting.

The meeting then dispersed.



## CHAPTER VII.

## AN ENGLISH HOME.

RUSTIM left Bedford Place, and went to reside with a family at Highbury Hill. It was not a mere boarding-house masquerading in the name of a private family as not a few of the boarding-houses do in the suburbs of London. It was a highly respectable family, and Rustim would not have been admitted into it but for the kind recommendation of the Warblers, who had by this time become very friendly with him, and evinced very great interest in his welfare. Rustim was anxious to gain experience of an English home, and the Warblers, concurring in his desire, recommended him to one Mr. and Mrs. Collins, who lived with their four children in a house at Highbury Hill. The house was three-storied and as plain and humdrum-looking from outside as are most of the dwelling-houses in London. It had a very small strip of land in the front and a much larger strip of land at the back, beyond which were situated the extensive grounds of a college. It was elegantly upholstered, and looked a picture

of repose, refinement and comfort. Mr. Collins was employed in a bank in the City, and drew a comfortable salary. He was clever, good and kind-hearted. His better half was a lively, affectionate and energetic individual, who bustled about all day long, busy with one thing or another, and looked at least ten years younger than she really was. They were a loving pair, who loved each other without being unseemly demonstrative, and cooed as if they had been married but yesterday. Mr. Collins kissed his wife when he left home on business or pleasure, and paid her the same tribute of affection when he returned. Kissing under such circumstances is often but a matter of form and conventionality among Englishmen which sometimes smacks of hypocrisy and mockery, but it was not so at all in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Collins, whose osculatory salutation had always a halo of genuine love and devotion. There were no janglings, bickerings or squabbles to disturb the tranquillity of their household. They lived in perfect peace and amity, deferring to each other's wishes and tastes, Mr. Collins never arrogating to himself supreme power, which husbands very often do even in a country where women are supposed to be men's equals. Ada and Jane were their first two children born within eighteen months

of each other. George came three years after Jane, and was followed by Frank after a long spell of ten years' infertility. Ada and Jane resembled each other very much, and yet differed very widely. Both were petit, good-looking and inclined to be stoutish. Both had soft grey eyes, lovely heads of hair, well chiselled lips and tapering fingers. Yet there was something undefinable in Jane's visage, which made her look more attractive than her sister. Ada was twenty-five years old, and carried an old head over young shoulders. She was sedate, loving, gentle and unsophisticated. Jane was rather vain and frivolous, and, although not half so clever and accomplished as Ada, eclipsed her in company by her pert and racy conversation. She looked upon housekeeping as a bore, took delight in shopping, and never missed a chance to go to theatres or balls. It was always a pleasure to her to stand at a window in Oxford Street or Regent Street looking at a stylish hat or a pretty skirt on a dummy. Still, she was a good soul, and possessed a tender heart, which ever responded to the miseries of others. George was tall, handsome and open-hearted, but possessed abilities far below the average. He was employed as a clerk in some office on 20s. a week, and his father thought he would

always remain a clerk, wearing out his life on a salary never exceeding thirty-five shillings a week. Frank was a droll child, full of fun and amusement. His face beamed with intelligence and his eyes twinkled with mirth. He was very fond of playing at soldiers with his cousins Bertie and Alf, and shouldered his toy-gun with the martial bearing of a Wellesly or a Marlborough.

It was a happy family ringing with joy, mirth and amusement. There was a reciprocity of love, esteem and good-will between the parents and children, without that servile obedience and cringing deference, which a *paterfamilias* in India expects even from his children, who have children of their own old enough to be mothers or fathers. Mr. Collins was a limited monarch, who ruled his small domain in a constitutional manner, always recognizing the right of freedom of speech and freedom of action of his subjects within constitutional limits. He discussed a variety of subjects with his children, and was not at all displeased when driven into a corner by any one of them. He did not expect his children to sit still like dummies before him, but talked with them, played with them, sang with them, and went out for strolls and drives with them,

the children ever appreciating his kindness and never forgetting the respect, which was due to him. The Indian *paterfamilias* is but an autocrat, who believes in his divine right as did King James the First of England, and considers his word to be the law which ought to be obeyed unquestioningly. Freedom of speech and freedom of action are out of the question with him, and he would consider it derogatory to his dignity to associate with the members of his family, especially of the weaker sex, with a tithe of freedom of an English *paterfamilias*. An English home is an ideal home, and is the best training-ground for her children. Waterloo might have been won upon the cricket-field of Eton, but the world-wide Empire of England was certainly won at the firesides of her merry homes. Rustim would have been loath to generalize from an isolated instance, but during his stay in England he had come in close contact with many families. The Collins had friends and relatives both in London and the country, and Rustim had access to them all. Moreover, he had made many friends himself, and was driven to the conviction that an English home was a nursery of freedom and greatness.

The Collins were a Nonconformist family, who practised Christian virtues rather than rituals, and showed tolerance and respect towards professors of other creeds. They observed the Sabbath, went to Church regularly, and generally spent Sunday evenings in singing hymns, Mr. Collins very often reading a chapter from the Bible or a printed sermon of an eminent divine. Sunday was really a day of rest with them, and a more Christian family there could not be.

About six months after Rustim's arrival at Highbury Hill, Jane was married to Mr. Magnus Myope, who was related to her on her mother's side. Their courtship was of a brief duration, and the wedding would not have been hurried on but for Mr. Myope's leave, which was then about to expire.

One day Mr. Collins having casually communicated his anxiety about George's future to Mr. Myope, that gentleman suggested that George should go out with him to India.

"What will he do there, Myope? The boy has no capacity," observed Mr. Collins.

"Why! my dear sir," replied Mr. Myope, "he will get a berth there like a shot. Aren't

we the rulers of India? I'll see that he is placed in a position where he will have little to do and everything will be placed cut and dry before him by his native subordinates. He will then have only papers to sign."

Mr. Collins shrugged his shoulders dubiously. But within three months of the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Myope and George for India, intelligence came that George had been appointed on a salary of Rs. 300 a month, in supersession of some Indian employés of long standing and tried experience, with prospects of a rapid rise in the future.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MRS. SPOONEY'S LIASON.

“FLAP dear, I shall feel lonely. Do come back as soon as you can,” said Mrs. Spooney to her husband, putting her arm round his neck, in the hall of their small but tastefully furnished house at Richmond.

The Major was about to leave by the morning train for Plymouth on business, which was expected to keep him away from home for about a week. There was such simulation of grief at the parting on the part of Mrs. Spooney that the Major felt affected, and kissing the upturned face of his wife, mumbled “Darling, I shan’t stay a minute longer than is absolutely necessary.”

Instantly the door of the house was opened, and the Major took the road to the station, casting affectionate glances behind him, until he turned the corner of the road, at his wife who stood in the doorway waving her hand and throwing out kisses to him.

“That girl is a gem. I don’t deserve her,” reflected the Major after the corner was turned, blissfully ignorant of the heartless laughter and strange musings of his wife about that time.



“Ah! Ah! Ah!” she rippled forth, and, going into the parlour, said to herself:—“What an idiot is Spooney to believe that I’m in love with him. I care this much for him;” and she snapped her fingers to express her meaning. “Men in their crass conceit fancy themselves superiors of women, but how few of them can fathom the depths of a woman’s heart and her chicanery and devices? Statesmen, legislators and warriors they may be, subtle, skilful and brave, but the woman-craft is and shall ever remain a sealed book to them. What are they if not mere wax in the hands of a clever woman?” and with a swelling bosom and eyes glistening with triumph she added, “Letitia Spooney is that woman. I must hurry up though. Popgun will be here very soon, and I don’t wish to be seen in this dress.” So saying, she ran up the staircase into her dressing-room.

Mrs. Spooney, after an elaborate toilette, descended into the drawing-room, eagerly awaiting the arrival of Mr. Popgun, who had promised to accommodate her with a loan of a hundred pounds.

“I wonder if that brute of a Popgun is coming at all,” she exclaimed vexedly, pacing the room.

Mr. Popgun arrived at last, and Mrs. Spooney felt relieved in mind.

"I thought you wern't coming at all," observed Mrs. Spooney reproachfully.

"I was detained at the bank," replied Mr. Popgun apologetically, unabashed at the falsehood he knew he was telling, the delay being in reality due to his over-sleeping himself after a nocturnal debauch. Mrs. Spooney had too much sense to believe him, but she said nothing beyond thanking him for the bundle of crisp notes which he placed in her hand.

"Oh, you blockhead! There are two hundreds; I had wanted only one," she said after counting the notes and stretching out her hand to return the excess.

"Keep the whole lot. I know you'll want it," replied Mr. Popgun with a significant wink of the eye, followed by kissing.

"Don't you know that in the eye of the law I'm the absolute property of Major Spooney of the 7th Light Infantry?" she said jestingly.

"Pshaw! You are as much my property as Spooney's. Spooney and I are co-parceners, and according to Hindu Law I've as much right to you as he has," replied Mr. Popgun.

“What wickedness you talk!” ejaculated Mrs. Spooney, coquettishly tapping Mr. Popgun upon the shoulder with the bundle of notes in her hand. They then repaired to the parlour for luncheon.

Major Spooney had been in Plymouth for two days. On the morning of the third day, soon after breakfast, he received from his wife a letter which overflowed with love and sentiment. He put it to his lips first, and then into a bag, which he had opened to take some papers out of, and soliloquized thus:—“I must be off to business at once. It won’t take me long, and I shall be free to return to my girl to-day. What a precious gem! loving, gentle, devoted and unselfish. My path wouldn’t have been strewn with thorns and brambles if she had crossed it when I threw away money on wine, women and worthless friends. I s’pose we all sow our wild oats at one time or another. It is of no use repining. I’ve come almost to the end of my tether. Still, there are some remnants of my fortune left, and with them I can be happy with this girl, whom it is a blessing to possess.”

The Major started off on business from his hotel in high spirits and with a resolve to bring it to a close as early as possible. The business transacted, he hurried back to

the hotel, and with his baggage drove to the station at once. Never before in his life was he so much excited. He had fought campaigns on the frontiers of India, but the excitement he had then felt was a mere whiz compared with the volcanic fury with which his heart was beating now.

“D——d the train. She is a long time coming,” said the Major impatiently, although there were ten minutes for the train. He looked at the clock at the station, then at his watch, then at the clock again, and walked up and down the platform restlessly. The train came in, bathed in an April shower, and the engine grunted throwing out volumes of smoke in thick fantastic clouds. The Major - skipped into a carriage, and the train moved on. It was an express train, and flew past fields and meadows, screeching, puffing and snorting, as if in distraction to reach its destination. The Major stretched his legs, and reclining his head against the cushion, fell into a reverie :—  
 “ I shan’t get home till nightfall. Letty will be surprised to see me, I am sure. But her surprise will be nothing compared to the thrill of pleasure she will feel. She’s awfully fond of me. Lucky dog, eh !” At the last thought he cast an admiring glance at himself, and stroked his moustache complacently.

The feeling was one of pleasure, but it flitted like a phantasmagoria, and dread overtook the Major all of a sudden. "Letitia is dead," something within him whispered and he started involuntarily. The ominous words were repeated, and try as he would to dismiss them, they came back to him with insistence.

"My mind is all ablaze. I s'pose it's due to the romance I was reading overnight. I must lie down for a while to compose myself." So saying, he lay down and closed his eyes. "Letitia is dead," whispered again that indefinable something within him in various keys. He started up exclaiming "What has come over me! Am I going daft, or are these words a foreboding of misfortune! No, no, it's nothing of the kind. My darling is alive. I am only excited." He then laughed at his own nervousness, and with a view to steady his nerves, imbibed some of the whisky he had in his hand-bag, undiluted as neither soda nor water was at hand. The effect was exhilarating, and the Major thought whisky was an elixir of life, and its inventor one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. He then fell asleep, and an hour later woke up with a slight headache.

Like all things earthly the journey came to an end, and at nine o'clock at night the

Major turned his latch-key into the lock of the door of his house. The door opened, he laid his baggage down noiselessly in the hall, and peeped into the parlour and the drawing-room, the doors of which were ajar. There was an ominous silence pervading, except for the tick of the clock in the hall, and the fears of the Major were revived with a ten-fold intensity. "Is the girl really dead? Was it then a presentiment? Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" reflected the Major distractedly, bounding up the staircase three steps at a time and opening the door of his wife's bedroom.

"Oh! You have frightened me, Flap," said Mrs. Spooney, springing from her bed and looking ashy white, the glorious hue of her skin having completely disappeared.

"I'm sorry to have dropped in thus. I didn't mean to frighten you, dearie. I only wanted to take you by surprise," replied the Major, kissing his wife. "Child," he added tenderly, "you must be ill, or else you wouldn't have retired so early."

"I felt a little low-spirited, dear, and was resting. I'll slip on my things soon, and order supper for you. You must be famishing. Go and have a wash," said Mrs. Spooney, pointing her finger in the direction of her husband's room.



“Come out Topsy. I’ll doctor you.” So saying; the Major stooped, and raising the valance, looked under the bed, but was petrified to see emerge from beneath it a biped brute.”

[See p. 89.]







“Sniff, sniff,” came a muffled sneeze from under the bedstead, and the Major inquired “who is there?”

“It’s Topsy, dear. She has a bad cold, poor thing. Off you go. It’s getting late,” replied Mrs. Spooney.

“Come out Topsy. I’ll doctor you.” So saying, the Major stooped, and, raising the valance, looked under the bed, but was petrified to see emerge from beneath it a biped brute. With the swiftness of an arrow Mr. Polemic Popgun darted out of the room, and was half way down the staircase before the Major sprang to the door after him. Anticipating the Major, Mrs. Spooney barricaded the door by standing against it, and held so firmly to his arm that he could not extricate himself without giving her a violent push accompanied by a more violent swearing. By the time the Major reached the landing, the door of the house went bang, and Mr. Popgun was out of sight.

The Major did not return to his wife’s room, but went down, and snatching his hat off a peg in the hall, left the house seething with rage.

“Thieves, burglars, murderers,” screamed the servant-girl in the kitchen on hearing the clatter of the footsteps and the bang of the door.

“ ‘Arry,’ ‘Arry ! you’ll be a wid’er afore marriage,” she whimpered frantically, thinking of her young man, and imagining that the villains would lay their hands on her throat the next instant, and murder her. The sound of the steps and the door ceased to reverberate, and she wondered what a long time the thieves were coming. At last she exclaimed “I made a mistake. It weren’t thieves. I ’eard master’s voice as shure as anything. Master is in Plymouth. It must be his ghost then. He must be dead, and his spirit is aprowlin’ here. How dreadful ! S’pose he comes and says to me ‘Mary, a small whisky and soda, please.’ Ghosts do want things they liked best while livin’, so I’ve ’eard. Oh, dear ! I shall drop dead if he do that. Better to ’ave a dozen burglars than one ghost.”

Her desperate situation gave her courage, and she flew upstairs without looking around her, dreading she would be accosted by the ghost.

“Oh ! Ma’am, Master is dead,” she gasped as she entered her mistress’s room unceremoniously.

“Where is he, Mary ? ” questioned Mrs. Spooner eagerly, suspecting the Major to have fallen into a swoon, or to have committed suicide.

"Oh! Ma'am, he is dead, he is dead," Mary gasped out again labouring for breath.

"Where is he? Tell me at once," demanded Mrs. Spooney sharply.

"He is in Plymouth, I s'pose; but I 'eard his ghost speakin' downstairs, Ma'am," whined Mary.

"Don't talk nonsense," said Mrs. Spooney reprovingly.

"As shure as I am alive, Ma'am, I 'eard Master's voice. He was aswearin', Ma'am," said Mary, nettled at the incredulity of her mistress.

"Ghosts are myths. They are a creation of a weak intellect or torpid liver. Mary, you have heard not the ghost of the Major, but the Major himself. He had been here, and see what he has done." So saying, Mrs. Spooney pointed out a swelling on her head which was a consequence of the push the Major had given her.

"Ma'am, you are hurt. I sees what 'as 'appened. 'Tis a case of wine, wiggin' and wallopin'. Men are monsters. They ought to be muzzled, Ma'am. Without womankind where would they be, I should like to know? There should be a matrimonial interdict," observed Mary, inclined to be gibberish.

Mrs. Spooney would not have tolerated such loquacity on the part of Mary, but she restrained herself, seeing in her a weapon of offence and defence when required. She, therefore, said affably "Mary, make me a cup of coffee, please. I feel thirsty." Mary withdrew to execute the order.

"Poor creature! she's writhing with pain. 'Arry, 'Arry, I shan't let you gammon me. I shan't, I shan't." Thus muttering, Mary stirred up the kitchen fire into a blaze.

After Mary had withdrawn, Mrs. Spooney was wrapped in meditation, and spoke in an audible whisper:—"To be forewarned is to be forearmed. I must find some way out of this difficulty. The skein is too far entangled, and needs careful unravelling. It's lucky that Mary does not know what has really happened. The villain of the drama was in and out of the house unbeknown to her. I had let him in, and he let himself out without her knowledge. So far, so good. But Spooney will be up in arms. The scales have fallen off his eyes. There will be a law-suit and a scandal. Connubial fidelity is a mockery, and nine women out of ten wear a veil of sham virtue. Still, it won't do to be a talk of the town. Spooney must be vanquished somehow. Every weapon is fair

in love and war, and I——.” At this stage Mrs. Spooney checked herself, and blaming her indiscretion in speaking loudly, went to the door, saying “These walls have ears, and every woman is born an eavesdropper.” She looked out of the room, and, leaning over the balustrades, was satisfied that Mary was nowhere near.

Shortly afterwards, Mary pottered in with coffee and some biscuits, and said “Ma’am, Master’s baggage is lying in the hall. Shall I bring it up?”

“If you please,” replied Mrs. Spooney.

The baggage was brought up, and the coffee having been finished, Mrs. Spooney asked Mary to take away the tray, bidding her good-night.

CHAPTER IX.

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MR. POPGUN IN TREPIDATION.

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MR. POPGUN passed a sleepless night, distracted by horrid dreams. He dreamt of the murder of Letitia, the suicide of Spooney, a coroner's inquest and his own arrest and handcuffing. "There is a knock at the door. The Police have come at last. My fate is sealed." So dreaming, he clutched at the bed-clothes, as if his safety depended upon them. The knock came again, and he opened his eyes. It was a real knock, but had somehow got mixed up with the dream. It had come from Esther, the servant-girl, who had been asked by Mr. Popgun to arouse him at 8 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Popgun shook with fear for fully half an hour, so very dire was the effect of the dream on him. He had no faith in dreams or supernatural agencies, and knew that the criminal law of his country would regard his misbehaviour as a moral turpitude, not a crime. Still, his system became the slave of his imagination, and he was paralyzed. He dressed hurriedly and descended to the parlour, wistfully running his eye through a copy of the *Daily News* of

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that morning to see if any catastrophe had occurred in the Spooney family at Richmond. He laid aside the paper, and with his breakfast lying untouched before him, was absorbed in a brown-study.

"I saved my skin last night," he soliloquized, "but I cannot save my reputation. It is foredoomed, whether Letitia is alive or dead, and whether Spooney has killed himself or not. My name, fame and fortune will soon be wallowing in filth unless some miracle happens. A woman is a thorn in the side of a man. What a recompense for having sprung from his loins? Adam lost Paradise on account of her; Parnell lost his stewardship on account of her; and I shall lose my superintendentship on account of her. Aye, great men have great falls." So saying, Mr. Popgun cast a glance of melancholy satisfaction at himself, for he had always considered his entity as indispensable in the service of the Crown, and, like the fly in the fable, had imagined that he was turning the wheel of the administration.

At this juncture, Esther announced Mrs. Spooney who followed in her wake. The call was unexpected, and almost took away Mr. Popgun's breath, who recognized in it an avant-courier of trouble.

"I'm surprised to see you, Mrs. Spooney," said Mr. Popgun after Esther had withdrawn.

"Surprised at my being alive, I suppose. Well you may, after your gallant flight last night," retorted Mrs. Spooney.

"I didn't want to compromise you," said Mr. Popgun confusedly.

"Say you didn't want your brains knocked out," taunted Mrs. Spooney.

"You do me injustice. Discretion is the best part of valour," said Mr. Popgun.

"Ah! my valiant knight, I want you to extricate me from this entanglement. Spooney will go to law, and you know the result—a divorce for me and five thousand pounds damages and costs against you," replied Mrs. Spooney with a significant nod of her head.

Mr. Popgun winced at the mention of the five thousand pounds and costs, and scratched his head, as if by that process he could find out a key to the problem.

"D—d if I could tell you what to do. I give it up," said Mr. Popgun despairingly after a pause.

"You then throw up the sponge. Knight-errants don't do that," replied Mrs. Spooney banteringly.



"You are provoking. Methinks you have something up your sleeve. Out with it," said Mr. Popgun coaxingly.

"Well, listen then," said Mrs. Spooney. "I racked my brain and ransacked bags and drawers to find out something to turn the tables on Flap. I searched his baggage and found my letter. I turned over drawer after drawer and shelf after shelf, and found beneath a brown paper on a shelf in a cupboard a bundle of letters in feminine handwriting. It was a strange handwriting, and I involuntarily started. How very jealous is a woman's nature! It will assert itself in spite of her. There were half-a-dozen letters full of sentimental trash and amorous rhapsody. Evidently they had been written before my marriage. I laid them aside in disappointment. 'What use could they be of to me?' said I to myself, and yet I was tempted to read them over again. Necessity is the mother of invention, and I wanted to invent something from them if I could. So I read them again, and great was my joy to find two of them undated. I jumped in ecstasy, for I knew their worth. Couldn't I blow up the Major with this powder and shot?"

"I don't see how you could," remarked Mr. Popgun dubiously.

“How thick-skulled you are. The point is clear. I would put my case thus:—Spooney has intrigued, and broken his marriage vow. The two letters prove it. I found them in his coat-pocket, accidentally of course, when he was at Plymouth, and wrote to him at once to explain. He came back home in a tantrum, worse for drink, struck me on the head and walked off swearing and swaggering.”

“Who is that lady?” inquired Mr. Popgun.

“One Annie Atkins—not a refined woman at all to judge from her letters,” replied Mrs. Spooney.

“O! I know her. She is the plump lady in black silk over whom Spooney had gone mad on board the steamer while coming home,” observed Mr. Popgun.

“What a taste!” ejaculated Mrs. Spooney with a toss of the head.

“There is no accounting for tastes. But Mrs. Atkins is an amiable young woman,” said Mr. Popgun.

“That’s the reason why her letters are full of rubbish. Widows scribble more sentimental nonsense than spinsters. It is practice that makes them perfect,” said Mrs. Spooney, irritated at Mrs. Atkins being considered amiable.

“A woman would not be a woman if she did not grudge a most commonplace compliment paid by a man to another woman,” thought Mr. Popgun. Being, however, interested in the plan hatched by Mrs. Spooney, he remarked:—“I don’t understand about the letter you say you had sent to Spooney. It must be a figment of imagination like the whole case. By interlacing it I am afraid you will be overdoing the case. Overlacing of the stays is as harmful in a law-suit as in a human body.”

“Right,” said Mrs. Spooney, feeling a little uncomfortable, imagining that the metaphor had been suggested by her figure. “The letter is not a pure fiction,” she continued. “I had sent one to Flap the other day. It was an ordinary letter only. I don’t suppose its receipt would be denied by him. At all events, Mary had posted it, and she would depose to the posting. Flap cannot produce that letter. I’ve abstracted it from his bag. He may swear that he had placed it there and that it contained no reference to Mrs. Atkins’ letters, but he won’t be believed by the jurymen. There will be his bare oath against my oath, plus a pretty face, copious tears and a swoon. Men are sentimental noodles all the world over. There will be a verdict in my favour.”

“Right as a trivet. What a clever woman you are, Letty! You would outdo Budmash Rao, my Chief Constable. He is a sly dog, and bolsters up cases and concocts evidence with consummate skill. He needs must find out criminals, but detective skill he has none; so he runs into an innocent person who does not tip him, and gets him punished. Justice is thus vindicated. He has some cardinal rules of his own, which are as inflexible as the rule of three. His monthly salary is Rs. 60, but he makes nearly two hundred. Deuced clever!”

“Bother your ——. I forget the man’s name. Time is precious, and I must be off at once to Mr. Jones, my solicitor. Would you lend me a hundred pounds? Litigation is very expensive, you know,” said Mrs. Spooney.

Mr. Popgun knew that he was being blackmailed, but he had become so much enamoured of the person and the plan of Mrs. Spooney that he drew a cheque for a hundred pounds in her favour. With it she left, Mr. Popgun admiring her receding figure, and muttering “After all, she is worth her weight in gold.”

Mrs. Spooney hailed a cab, and comfortably ensconced in it, drew the cheque out of her pocket to see if it was safe, and said with a faint smile on her lips, "Popgun is flush of money. He has fleeced many in India, and it is my turn now to fleece him. It is the divine law of retribution."

The cheque having been cashed, Mrs. Spooney went to her legal adviser.

"Oh! Mr. Jones, I am so unhappy," she said with tears in her eyes and looking a picture of unhappiness.

"I am sorry to see you so much upset. What is the matter?" inquired Mr. Jones soothingly.

"Oh! I feel miserable," sobbed Mrs. Spooney.

"I guess there is some domestic trouble," ventured Mr. Jones, finding Mrs. Spooney convulsing with sobs, and anxious to bring the interview to a head.

"Domestic trouble of the greatest magnitude, Mr. Jones. My husband has deceived me. He has broken my heart, and has behaved towards me most cruelly. He is a brute. I disdain to use strong language, Mr. Jones. It's not in my line. But he is a monster, a viper,

a villain and a wretch," whimpered Mrs. Spooney, shedding crocodile tears in profusion.

"I thought your husband was very fond of you," observed Mr. Jones.

"Appearances are deceptive, and all that glitters isn't gold. He is a huge fraud," whined Mrs. Spooney.

Then dashing off her tears, she recounted her cock-and-bull story with such an air of sincerity and feeling that Mr. Jones, in spite of his knowledge of feminine strategy and subterfuge acquired in the course of a twenty-five years' practice, was affected.

"I am sorry for you, Mrs. Spooney. Let me see what I can do in the matter," said Mr. Jones sympathetically at the termination of the story.

"Oh! Mr. Jones, I can't possibly live with that man any longer. No respectable woman would under the circumstances. I must have a divorce," exclaimed Mrs. Spooney, the vision of Mr. Popgun as the most likely successor of the Major floating through her mind.

"I am afraid there isn't sufficient evidence," remarked Mr. Jones after deliberation. "The two letters raise a strong suspicion, but there is no legal evidence of adult—, I mean of moral lapse on the part of the Major."

“Have I then no remedy? Is this the law of the Realm? Then it is rightly called an ass, let me tell you,” sneered Mrs. Spooney.

“The law is just,” said Mr. Jones quietly.

“Fie! Is it just to tie a woman hand and foot eternally to a man, who has broken his marriage vow and is intriguing with another woman under her very nose? The sooner such law is abolished the better. But what chance is there of its abolition as long as men sit at Westminster? They make one law for themselves, another for women. The House must be stormed, the unrighteous barrier pulled down, the equality of women with men asserted by screeching, screaming and howling from the gallery of the House of Commons. Heroic actions must perforce have heroic remedies,” said Mrs. Spooney with animation.

“You may form a petticoat-battalion, Mrs. Spooney. I express no opinion. We lawyers never do it without a fee. Ah! Ah! Ah!” laughed Mr. Jones. “Let us talk about the case. I’ll tell you what I would do. I would send on your behalf a thundering letter to the Major, and await the answer. What say you, Mrs. Spooney?”

Mrs. Spooney nodded assent.

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## CHAPTER X.

## A DISILLUSION.

MAJOR SPOONEY received the letter. It came to him like a bolt from the blue, and he was much incensed at it. "Roguery supplants justice. What base machination! What wicked manœuvring!" exclaimed he, boiling with rage. "It is"—twirling the letter in his hand—he continued, "the production of a most unholy duality in the pantheon of devilry. I wish I had not preserved Annie Atkins' letters. Oh, Mrs. Atkins! what a nice wife you would have made to me! You have a homely face, but a most comely heart. I have fallen a victim to that siren. She is a regular man-charmer. But d——d if I would let her mount the high horse." After this soliloquy, the Major left his room in Mrs. Smith's boarding-house in Bedford Place, whither he had put up since he had left home the previous night.

"Marry in haste and repent at leisure. The Major is taciturn, but as sure as I am alive, there has been a serious row between him and his wife. That woman is an artful hussy,



I know," said Mrs. Smith to her daughter as she saw the Major emerge from her house.

"Ma dear, my prognostication has come true after all. Hadn't I said that bad weather on a wedding-day augured nuptial infelicity?" replied Miss Smith.

"Tut, tut, it is a mere accident," remarked Mrs. Smith.

Both the mother and daughter then became silent, the former thinking of her hymeneal happiness and the latter of the possibility of becoming the Major's second wife. "There may be a divorce," she mused, "and the Major may marry me. His coming here is providential."

Scarcely had the Major turned the corner of Southampton Row when he stumbled upon Rustim.

"Hullo! Major, you have nearly knocked me down. What's up? You look seedy," said Rustim, starting at the woe-begone face of the Major.

"Nothing," replied the Major tersely. Then instantly making up his mind to unfold his tale of woe to Rustim he said:—"Mr. Rustim, I want to speak to you. Will you kindly spare me half an hour?"

"Certainly, with the greatest pleasure," replied Rustim. Both of them then walked towards Bedford Place.

"I hope Mrs. Spooney is all right," remarked Rustim, suspecting some trouble in that quarter.

"She is dead," replied the Major.

"When did she die? I am very sorry to hear it. Major, you have my sincerest condolence," said Rustim.

"She is not dead to the world, but she is dead to me. You may well condole with me," replied the Major.

"You talk in enigma. I don't understand you," said Rustim.

"Wait till we are at Mrs. Smith's," returned the Major. Soon they were closeted together in the Major's room.

"Diabolical! Popgun deserves to be hanged," exclaimed Rustim at the conclusion of the story which the Major related to him faithfully. "But I am afraid, Major," he continued, "you can't have a divorce. There is not a tittle of evidence to prove your wife's liason."

“The woman wants a divorce too. It is immaterial who obtains it against whom, so long as it is obtained,” returned the Major.

“Mrs. Spooney cannot get a divorce either unless you plead guilty to her charge,” remarked Rustim.

“No, never. The charge is most infamous. I would much rather kill myself than bespatter the honour of an innocent woman,” replied the Major with indignation.

“A noble sentiment! I never thought you would barter your honour in exchange for freedom,” remarked Rustim.

“Then there won’t be any suit against me,” said the Major.

“I don’t know about that. Mrs. Spooney may drag you to Court, as she won’t have to spend even a farthing. Whether she wins or loses the case, you will have to provide for her costs, as she has no independent means of her own,” replied Rustim.

“That is a most unjust law,” said the Major.

“Just or unjust. That is the law of England. I read it only recently,” replied Rustim.

"What would you suggest to me?" asked the Major.

"I would suggest a separation by mutual consent. It won't do to have dirty linens washed in a court of law. Your reputation and Mrs. Atkins' would be mauled by the sharp claws of calumny," replied Rustim.

"Right. I shouldn't like Mrs. Atkins to suffer in any way," remarked the Major.

"I would intercede, if you would let me," said Rustim.

"You have my carte-blanche for that purpose," replied the Major.

Rustim then withdrew, having asked the Major in vain to dine with him that evening.

Miss Smith who had been eavesdropping through the key-hole of the Major's room, but had succeeded in overhearing only fragments of the conversation, jumped to the conclusion that there was to be a divorce. Her wish was perhaps father to her thought. Stealing down the staircase she mused, "It is quite on the cards that I may marry the Major. The signs are all in my favour. Tra la la."

A week later, a separation by mutual consent having been arranged through the intercession of Rustim, Major Spooner sailed for

India. Mrs. Smith was genuinely sorry for the Major, but opined that if he had taken her into his confidence she might have managed things much better than Rustim. Miss Smith concurred in her mother's opinion, thinking that her mother might have manœuvred a divorce, but she cheerfully resigned herself to Fate. Rustim accompanied the Major to the Docks.

"Rustim," said the Major in a tremulous voice, "my heart is sinking into despair. I have fallen from the pinnacle of happiness into the abyss of misfortune. My most trusted friend has proved a traitor, and others whom I had helped with money have turned a cold shoulder to me. You have stood by me in my solitude, and helped me without expecting any return. I thank you for your kindness, but thank you still more for opening my eyes. I had been blinded by prejudice against your countrymen. I distrusted them and treated them with contempt without the least justification. I never mixed with them, and judged them by the servants in my employ and by what I had heard of them from Europeans, who had as little mixed with them as myself. What a cruel wrong upon a nation!"

"Major," replied Rustim, "I don't deserve any thanks. I simply did my duty. But I feel

immensely pleased at your disillusionment. May God of all nations similarly disillusionize your countrymen in India, who, with a few exceptions, treat Indians with disdain, and deny them their birthright of free British citizenship. There are no people upon God's earth more responsive to kindness, more grateful for small mercies, and more devoted to their Sovereign than the people of India. The Indians have an ancient civilization, and although they are down on luck at present, they will, as sure as the sun shines, take their proper place in the Council of civilized nations in no distant future."

"Rustim, I shall try to make amends for the past. I feel that much of the dissatisfaction which prevails in India is due to the cursed pride and domineering spirit of many of my countrymen. Good-bye," said the Major.

"Good-bye," replied Rustim.

And the ship weighed anchor.

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CHAPTER XI.

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MEETING AT WESTMINSTER HALL.

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THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

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“THERE is a handsome dark gentleman at the door, Ma’am. I forget his name Ma’am,” said the servant-girl to Mrs. Upright, who was in the elegantly furnished boudoir of her house at Kew, engaged in drawing a picture of a Brahmin lass replenishing her bright copper utensils with water at a village well, close by a banyan tree on which was perched a peacock with outstretched plumage of matchless beauty, self-satisfied and contented. The picture was life-like, and Mr. Upright stood admiring it over his wife’s shoulders.

“Con dear, the dark gentleman could be no other than our friend Mr. Rustim. Let us go to him,” said Mrs. Upright, laying down her pencil. Both Mr. and Mrs. Upright then went down to Rustim, and expressed their unfeigned delight at seeing him.

“I was thinking of you this morning,” said Mr. Upright to Rustim. “There is a

meeting at Westminster Hall in the afternoon. Would you care to go with me? Mr. Firebrand is to speak upon the Indian National Congress."

"I should very much like to go with you, sir. I presume it is a public meeting," remarked Rustim.

Mr. Upright nodded assent.

Mr. and Mrs. Upright pressed their youthful friend to stay to luncheon, after which Mr. Upright and Rustim started for Westminster Hall, Rustim having promised Mrs. Upright to call oftener than he had done.

There were about sixty persons present at the meeting. Most of them were ex-Anglo-Indian officials, a couple of M. P.'s and about a dozen Indians. Sir Grasping Grabber presided, and introduced the lecturer as a most capable officer, who had served his Queen and country for over thirty years, and who possessed unique experience of India, and had won the esteem and affection of her people. ("Question" shouted an Indian, and cries of "No, no" emanated from several Indians.) "I see," continued Sir Grasping, "that some Indian gentlemen take an exception to my last statement, but I have the indubitable authority



of the *Bagpipe Chronicle*, the loadstar of Anglo-Indian journalism. (Most of the Anglo-Indians cheer.)

“The Vernacular newspapers tell a different tale,” ejaculated an Indian.

Sir Grasping: “The *Khushamate-Amal-dar*—a highly respectable native journal, has echoed the sentiment published in the *Bagpipe Chronicle*.” (Renewed cheers from some Anglo-Indians.)

The Indian: “The *Khushamat* is true to its name. Barring it, the Indian press is unanimous on the point.” (*Indians cheer*.)

Sir Grasping Grabber, irritated at this interruption, said: “Well, whatever our Indian friends here may say to the contrary, I do maintain, knowing as I do India and her people, that the *Bagpipe Chronicle* is the best and the most reliable exponent not only of Anglo-Indian sentiment and opinion, but also of Indian sentiment and opinion.” (Loud applause from some Anglo-Indians and cries of “Absurd, absurd” from the Indians.)

Sir Grasping then called upon Mr. Numskull Firebrand, I. C. S., late Commissioner of Highhandabad, to address the meeting.

Mr. Firebrand began: "Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I have spent the best portion of my life in India in the service of the Crown, and feel that I can speak with a certain amount of authority and confidence on the present condition of India and her teeming millions of people. Never before to my mind was India governed better than now, nor were her people more thriving and contented than at present. Bloodshed, rapine, misrule and chaos, which prevailed in an inordinate degree before the advent of the British rule in India have completely disappeared now, and peace, prosperity, order and good government reign instead. We have conferred an immense boon upon the people of India by our impartial administration of justice, by our abstention from interfering in any way with their faiths and religious dogmas, and by ensuring to them complete security of life and property which are the concomitants of the British rule all the world over. Now, I challenge any man to deny that during recent years there has been spread a net-work of railways all over the country and commerce has multiplied rapidly. There are signs of opulence and growing prosperity discernible everywhere, and we may be pardoned for priding ourselves upon having achieved that result by our just and generous

policy, and by our efficient and well-regulated administration. Our administration in India is unique and perfect, and any change in its organization will be fraught with peril. What service is there in the world which can compare with the Civil Service of India? The Indian Civil Service is manned by men of great talent and ability, and has always played the part of the warp and the weft in the weaving of the fabric of our administration. Sir, the Indian National Congress has assailed our administration, and has urged for its reform. As that body has of late loomed very largely in the public eye, I propose to deal with it and its propaganda. The Indian National Congress is a high-sounding name. It no more represents the Indian people than you or I. It is a body composed of demagogues, wire-pullers and sedition-mongers, who represent themselves or at the best represent a few thousands of educated natives, but by no means do they represent the masses. By their vitriolic speeches and ill-founded accusations they have raised a leaven of unrest in the country, and have disseminated seeds of disaffection by kindling in the people a desire to claim a share in the administration of the Government of the country for which they are certainly not at all qualified. What do these

Congressmen demand? They want a good many things. But the chief items in their programme are five. First, the enlargement of the Imperial and Provincial Councils upon the basis of popular representation ; secondly, the retrenchment of military expenditure ; thirdly, the employment of Indians in the service of the Crown in a much larger number than now ; fourthly, the separation of the judicial from the executive branch of the administration ; and lastly, the amelioration of the condition of the peasantry who are in a state of chronic poverty.

With regard to the enlargement of the Legislative Councils upon the basis of popular representation, it will be an evil day for our rule to accede even tentatively to the demands of the Congressmen. Representative bodies are alien to the national instinct of the Indian people. They are exotic plants which can never thrive on an Indian soil, and any experiment in that direction must be foredoomed to failure. By our education and upbringing, by our national character and inherent qualities to govern, which we have imbibed with our mother's milk, we Englishmen are best fitted to govern India, and, unless it is demonstrated to the contrary, no change in the direction indicated by the Congress should be made. It will not be reforming but deforming the

Councils to the great prejudice of the masses, whom Providence has placed under our care. The Councils as they are constituted at present have catered to the national wants liberally and unstintingly, and until a strong case is made out for remodelling them it will be a desecration to touch them. The Congressmen are a garrulous lot, and cannot be trusted for sobriety or good common sense.

Now a word with regard to the retrenchment of military expenditure. Our army is very costly. But what are we to do? There is Russia on the frontier ever growling at us. She is a powerful enemy and to protect India from her attack we must maintain a large army. We cannot trust the natives with arms. We cannot enlist them as volunteers. What a sorry spectacle the Bengali Baboos would make as soldiers! They can talk glibly and write flamboyant articles, but soldiering is not in their line.

Then, with regard to the employment of natives in the service of the country on a much larger scale than now, I do not think a more impertinent demand can be imagined. We give the natives as many posts as we can conveniently give them. The subordinate judicial service and the subordinate executive service are wholly manned by the native

element. What more do the Congressmen want? We who are the rulers of India, we who have won India by the sword and are prepared to keep it by the sword, surely must have fat appointments, whether responsible or sinecure, reserved for ourselves and our children. The Congressmen prattle of equity. If this is not equity I fail to understand what equity means.

The next item in the Congress propaganda is the separation of the judicial from the executive branch of the administration. Well, on this point the Congressmen are talking arrant nonsense. They have no idea how the wheel of the administration moves. They have failed to recognize that the proposed separation will take lubrication off the wheel and retard its free and full rotation. The combination of the two branches must be maintained intact. I do not wish to play the hypocrite by taking shelter behind the stalking-horse of expenditure, but avow candidly that the proposed separation, if carried out, would be highly detrimental to the prestige of our executive officers. Be it remembered that prestige is the life-blood of our official existence in India, and to impair it will be a huge political blunder. The Collector of a district, who is

its chief executive officer, must perforce be the Chief Magistrate of that district, and continue to have all the magistrates in that district under his control and influence. Our Mamlatdars and other revenue officers will cease to be dreaded by the people if they are shorn of their magisterial powers, and the collection of revenue will become an almost impossible task for them. It is absurd to think of placing the magistracy beyond the pale of the influence of the head of the district, for there are occasions when he may have to pull the magisterial string from behind the curtain for the exigencies of the administration. Believe me, the Collector is feared, because he himself is a magistrate and has other magistrates amenable to his influence. Shear him of his magisterial power and his prestige will disappear.

Now I come to the last item in the Congress programme, viz., the poverty of the peasantry. Men, sir, may lie, but not statistics. There is overwhelming evidence that the land revenue has mounted up by leaps and bounds during recent years. Does that indicate poverty or the reverse of it? Cultivators cannot pay land-tax without money, and there cannot be money in their pockets without a bumper harvest or a good price for the produce of their land. Our worthy Chairman is the

person best qualified to speak upon the condition of the Indian peasantry. Credit is solely due to him for the large increase in the land assessment. It is his monumental work, which raises its finger of scornful reproach at the mendacious assertion of the Congress that the Indian peasantry is engulfed in abject poverty.

Sir, I have demonstrated, I hope, fully and convincingly, the fatuous insanity of the Congress demands. The Congress is a mischievous body. It is a dynamo of sedition and unrest which charges the native public with a strong current of discontent and disaffection, and incites them to rebellion. (Cries of 'Shame, shame' and 'Lies, lies' from the Indians.) The Congress must be extirpated root and branch, and the native press which espouses its cause and clamours for a reform of the administration, although no reform is needed at all, must be muzzled by the Press Gagging Act. (Renewed cries of 'Shame, shame.') Sir, some Anglo-Indian officials are in favour of freedom of speech and liberty of the press. I do not believe in planting occidental institutions in an oriental soil. The Indians are under our tutelage, and we alone have a right to determine what is good for them." (Applause and hisses.)



Mr. Polemic Popgun spoke next. He endorsed all that the previous speaker had said, and urged the necessity of invoking the aid of section 124A of the Penal Code much oftener than at present. He then proceeded :—

“ Mr. Chairman, the cognizance of the offence of sedition must rest with the magistrates exclusively, and the High Courts must be deprived of their jurisdiction. The judges of the High Courts are, as a rule, soft-hearted, soft-headed and short-visioned, who talk perennially of the canons of construction, Maxwell on Statutes, the rights of the people, and the principle of justice, equity and good conscience. The magistrates, if left to themselves unfettered by the High Courts, will do admirable justice, and you may depend upon me that as Police Superintendent of Poorgunj I will see that the persons convicted of sedition by the magistrates are marched off from the Court-house to the Police-station—a considerable distance, if you please—handcuffed like burglars and dacoits, so that they may feel humiliation and disgrace.” (There was a commingling of cheers and hisses, and cries of “ Order, order” were raised.)

Mr. Bungling Blowhard rose next, amidst deafening cheers from some Anglo-Indians and groans from the Indians, and said that it would be mere affectation on his part to deny that

the *Bagpipe Chronicle* was the loadstar of journalism in India. The *Bagpipe*, he admitted, had struck different notes at different times, but with the exception of such journalistic aberrations engendered by a journalistic policy, it had always striven to keep down the educated natives, expose their pretensions, and present them in their true colours to the Anglo-Indian public and Government. This policy, he continued, the *Bagpipe* had adopted in the sound conviction that without it the British rule in India would be imperilled. Mr. Blowhard proceeding further said : “ Mr. Chairman,—There is nothing that I can add to the masterful speech delivered by Mr. Firebrand. It has my hearty concurrence. However, I should like to add, in reference to the commendably pithy speech of Mr. Popgun, that instead of resorting to section 124A of the Penal Code as suggested by him, it would be desirable to make use of section 153A, which deals with the offence of promoting or attempting to promote feelings of enmity and hatred between different classes of her Majesty’s subjects. That section is as elastic and comprehensive as section 124A, and in most cases will serve an equal purpose without arousing the stir and commotion which usually follow in the wake of prosecutions for

sedition. The word 'sedition' is an ugly word, and I would therefore strongly recommend my suggestion to the Government of India for their careful consideration." (Cheers and ironical cries of 'Bravo, bravo' were raised.)

The Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy in a pulpit tone spoke next. He said he was sure that all who had assembled there had heard of his evangelical exploits in India, notably the conversion of ten pariahs at one time. (Here Mr. Firebrand whispered to Sir Grasping Grabber: "D—n Puffy. He is on his old tack. Pull him up sharp.")

The Chairman remarked that Mr. Puffy was irrelevant.

Mr. Puffy, thinking that he had been called irreverent, lost his temper, and retaliated by calling the Chairman a political, social and moral Judas. At this a great deal of confusion was created at the meeting and cries of 'Order, order' and 'Chair, chair' were raised.

The Chairman asked Mr. Puffy to withdraw the epithet which he did, being assured that nothing more objectionable than the word irrelevant had been used. The Reverend gentleman then resumed his speech, which, after sundry digressions, he wound up thus:—"Sir, the political doctors have failed to diagnose the

malady from which India suffers. She suffers from a spiritual cataract, which can be extracted only by the forceps of the Gospel of Christ. Let, therefore, the Asian Mission be helped, my countrymen, much more largely than heretofore, and I, the humble servant of my great Master, am ready to don the evangelical armour once more." (Laughter.)

The next speaker was Rustim. He said:—  
 "Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without raising my humble voice against the opinions and sentiments expressed by the previous speakers. The Indian National Congress is not a dynamo of sedition and disloyalty as described by the lecturer, but is a body composed of the cream of Indian intellect, Indian culture and Indian refinement, permeated by a patriotic motive, which is not in the least degree incompatible with obedience to the established Government of India and unbounded loyalty to the Crown of England. The Congress does not desire Englishmen to clear out of India bag and baggage as has been wilfully misrepresented in some quarters. The Congress does not want the British rule in India to be overthrown, or to tarnish in any way the flag which has brought to them freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom

of religion, and last though not least security of life and property. Sir, when one speaks of the Congress one naturally has in one's mind the educated Indians, who are not a few thousands, but are over a million and whose number is fast increasing every day. Moreover, these educated men are the mouth-piece of their semi-educated and illiterate countrymen, whose wants, grievances, aspirations, traditions and ideals they fully appreciate and realize, and whose confidence therefore they possess. Sir, it is fallacious to speak of the Congress as a body of a handful of educated men who represent themselves or at the best a few thousand educated Indians. Attend any session of the Congress and you will be perfectly disillusioned. The large concourse of people of various castes and creeds, several hundreds in number, gathered together under a huge canopy of canvas, discussing the politics of their country in a loyal, temperate and dignified manner, would convince you at once of the fatuous absurdity of the charge of disloyalty and sedition. Have any of you gentlemen ever attended a Congress-meeting even as spectators? Has Mr. Firebrand ever attended it? Has Mr. Popgun or Mr. Bungling Blowhard ever attended it? I wait for an answer." (Whereupon Mr. Firebrand admitted

that neither he nor his two friends had ever been to a Congress-meeting.) "Then," said Rustim, "what right have you to brand the Congress with sedition and disloyalty? Is there anything in the speeches delivered at its meetings which you can honestly take exception to?" (Here Mr. Blowhard observed that the Congressmen said one way and thought another.) "Well," proceeded Rustim, "I never thought that the great luminary of the *Bagpipe Chronicle* was a clairvoyant. For my part, I do not believe in thought-reading. I prefer to judge people by their words and actions, and do not pretend to read their minds. Let us see what the Congressmen demand. Their chief grievances have been discussed by the lecturer, and I will follow the order in which he has dealt with them. The first is the enlargement of the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils upon the basis of popular representation. This demand has taken away the breath of some people. It seems to them a domination of the Indians in the Councils and a corresponding helplessness and impotence of the governing class. They seem to conjure up a picture of an Indian regime in all its splendour and an ignoble downfall of the British Supremacy. All this is a mere phantom begotten of timidity,

prejudice and want of even superficial study. The Congress does not aim at any such thing. Nothing is more remote than this from its mind. The bare mention of it produces a frown upon its brow and a quiver of indignation on its lips. Its demand is legitimate and extremely modest. No Englishman worthy of that name will ever grudge it, I am sure, if he can only be persuaded to take a calm and dispassionate view of the question. The Congress does not claim the control of the purse, nor does it claim a manhood suffrage,—aye, even a modicum of franchise for a twentieth part of its vast population. It only asks that certain public bodies, and, if practicable, individuals possessing certain educational and other requisite qualifications may be conceded the privilege of returning a certain number of members to the Councils, who should possess a right to move amendments to the Budget and demand a division, circumscribed by a preponderance of Government majority and a veto possessed by the Head of Government.

The Councils, as they are constituted at present, do not give satisfaction to the people at all, and to say that they fulfil or adequately cater to the national wants is but a figment of imagination. The tide of

civilization, in spite of devices created by human ingenuity to keep it back, bounds merrily onward to innundate the whole country. Education is increasing fast, although it would progress much faster if Government would take greater interest in it than now. There are signs of a national awakening everywhere, and there is a clamour for reform of the Legislative Councils. It is idle to think of meeting this situation by old maxims. Even the ablest of rulers will fail. As averred by Mr. Buckle in his book on civilization in England that "for a progressive nation there is required a progressive polity ; that within certain limits innovation is the sole ground of security ; that no institution can withstand the flux and movements of society, unless it not only repairs its structure, but also widens its entrance ; and that no country can long remain either prosperous or safe, in which the people are not gradually extending their power, enlarging the privileges and incorporating themselves with the functions of the State."

Sir, the Congress next complains about our heavy military expenditure. The Indians fully recognize the desirability of maintaining an efficient army, but the costs are appalling and press heavily upon the nation. Over one-third



of the national revenue is swallowed up by it. This is intolerable in the case of a poor and indigent country like India, which cannot stand this perpetual bleeding without menace to its existence. The discontent and resentment, which are rife on account of it, are highly augmented by the fact that India is saddled with the whole of the expenditure, although, according to the principles of justice and equity, a considerable portion of it ought to be shared by the Government of England. The Indian Army is not for India alone, but is always at the command of England for Imperial purposes. It has served in Malta, China, Egypt, Arabia and Africa, and England has only to order it to go to any part of the world in future. Still, India—poor, unfortunate, ill-starred India—is forced to bear the incidence of the whole expenditure.

The Indians are willing to serve as volunteers. They are willing to serve their Queen and their country, but their services are not accepted. There is unnecessary distrust and unnecessary nervousness on the part of the Rulers, with the result that dissatisfaction and despair are created in the people. Confidence begets confidence, love begets love, and justice and generosity are a fruitful parent of contentment and joy. Why do not the Rulers then

inspire confidence among the people by acts of statesmanship, magnanimity and prescience? By all means let them proceed slowly and carefully. Let them first try the experiment with a limited number of people possessing a certain *status* and qualification. But the time has arrived when they must make a beginning—be it ever so small. It is churlish of some Anglo-Indians of the type of our lecturer to make fun of the Bengalees, and to stigmatize them as past masters in the art of rancorous verbosity, malignant garrulity and venomous scribbling, who needlessly embarrass the Government, without being able to be helpful by a vigorous common sense or a muscular arm. There is no portion of the Indian nation more unjustly ridiculed and defamed than the Bengalees; but however poignant and unworthy may be the shaft of ridicule, the Bengalees are destined to play a most important part in the future history of India. Bengal, after all, is the apple of the eye of India.

Now, I come to the question of the employment of Indians in the service of the Crown in a much larger number than at present. The grievance is a tangible one. What the Indians complain of is that they are excluded from the high offices of the State. It is true, as averred by the lecturer, that most of the subordinate

posts in the judicial and executive branches of the administration are held by Indians. But that is not a meritorious act at all on the part of Government. The Government is obliged to make a virtue of necessity as qualified Europeans and Eurasians cannot be had for the salaries attached to those appointments. The bulk of the fat appointments go to Europeans, very often at the cost of the efficiency of the administration, although capable Indians are available for those appointments. It is contended by some people that by the right of conquest Englishmen have acquired a prescriptive right to appropriate the cream, leaving the whey of the administration to the Indians. Luckily both for India and the fair name of England that is not what the Queen's Proclamation has laid down. Would that the lecturer and his ilk follow the lofty, majestic and noble policy enunciated in it! The best way for Englishmen to thrive is to encourage and promote commerce between India and England to the reciprocal advantage of both countries. The monopoly of high offices on the part of Europeans naturally causes discontent and heart-burning among the people of India, and the Congress asks the Government to cure that cancer of discontent.

The next grievance is the present pernicious system of continuing the judicial and executive functions united in one and the same individual. The system is an anachronism; it is rampant with mischief, and is a fruitful source of oppression, although it may be that in days gone by it had worked tolerably well. Very often the same person is both the prosecutor and the judge. I will narrate one instance. There was, very recently, a Mamlatdar, who, as executive officer, directed a merchant to pull down instantly a weather-board attached to his house, averring that it projected over a strip of land of which Government was the owner. The merchant maintained that the land belonged to him and that the projection was lawful. He, therefore, refused to carry out the order of the Mamlatdar. The Mamlatdar became angry and threatened to pull down the weather-board with his own hands. The merchant challenged him to do so. This was too much for the Mamlatdar. His dignity was mortally offended. He went away from the scene of the alleged encroachment, and directed the 'Madvi' of the village to present to him, as magistrate of that place, a complaint against the merchant for the alleged encroachment. The Mamlatdar in his magisterial metamorphosis held an *improptu* court on the

verandah of the house of the Police Patel\* of the village, accepted the complaint and issued a summons against the merchant, making it returnable that very instant. The merchant appeared in answer to the summons, and asked for a postponement, in order to enable him to instruct a lawyer and to prepare his defence. The application was refused and the farce of a trial was gone through. The merchant was convicted and fined. The merchant appealed, and the conviction was set aside by the Appeal Court.

The above is by no means a rare or an extreme case. Numerous instances of the baneful result of the union of the judicial and executive functions may be cited. Legal practitioners in the Mofussil will tell you appalling stories of miscarriage of justice. Some District and Sub-Divisional Magistrates do not consider it wrong to influence the magistrates subordinate to them. They have only to throw out a hint in a *nonchalant* way, and their wishes are carried out to the great detriment of the impartial administration of justice. There are instances in which some District Magistrates, who have come to regard lawyers as a thorn in the side of the magistracy, are known to have enjoined upon the magistrates subordinate to

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\* A Village Officer.

them not to accommodate at all, but, if possible, to inconvenience lawyers practising before them. Then again, Assistant Collectors, who are in charge of Divisions, very often decide upon a report submitted to them by the police, as to which of the complaints made to the police by the people are false and which are not. Upon their decisions action is taken against the persons supposed to have made the false complaints, and the selfsame Divisional Officers in their capacity as magistrates are very often called upon to adjudicate upon the guilt or innocence of the very persons in respect of whose conduct they had already formed an unfavourable opinion. Even Superintendents of Police are able to influence judicial trials by subordinate magistrates. A Police Jamadar once applied to a Magistrate for a remand of an accused person in custody on the ground that the District Superintendent of Police had issued an order that in all cases of a cognizable offence an inquiry should be first made as to whether there were any previous convictions standing against the accused person. The offence in this particular instance was a highly trumpery one, and the Magistrate was disinclined to grant a remand; but the Superintendent's order made him nervous, and he ordered the remand.

For over a fortnight the unfortunate accused remained in the lock-up of the Police Station, and eventually it was found that there was nothing known against him. He was then tried, and found not guilty. Thus an innocent person was kept in confinement for a period, which, in all probability, did not exceed the period of incarceration which would have been allotted to him if found guilty. This is not the only case of such hardship. Similar cases have likewise taken place. The Police Superintendent is in a sense under the control of the Collector, who as District Magistrate is the head of the magistracy in his District, and the Superintendent, if he is dissatisfied with a subordinate magistrate, complains against him to the Collector. The Police Superintendent, who is generally a European, carries much weight with the Collector on account of his high position, and the subordinate magistrates, who are but the *quondam* clerks of Collectors and Assistant Collectors, drawing poor salaries and possessing no legal attainments, are afraid to incur his displeasure. The Judicial branch must be divorced from the Executive, and subordinate magistrates, like subordinate judges, must be drawn from the rank of qualified legal men, and placed under the immediate control of the District Judge, subject to the

final authority of the High Court. The Collector must cease to be the Chief Magistrate of the District, and to have any control over the subordinate magistrates. As head of the District, the Collector will continue to wield very great power, subject only to the wholesome restraint which will be imposed by the deprivation of the anomalous character which he fills at present, and of the obnoxious control over the subordinate magistracy. Even an innovation deserves to be made in the selection of District Judges. Revenue men possessing neither judicial experience nor training ought not to be pitchforked on the Bench as has hitherto been done. Sir, the subject is wide. I must abandon it here. The combined system of judicial and executive functions is a veritable apple of Sodom, which, although it pleases the eye of the lecturer, is baneful to the good government of the country.

The last grievance relates to the poverty of the Indian peasantry. It breaks one's heart to speak upon that subject. The population of India is about 300 millions, of which 80 per cent. subsist by agriculture. The Indian peasant contributes one-fourth of the national revenues. God alone knows how hard he toils and how cruelly he stints himself to



pay his contribution. There is no joy or sunshine of life for him ; there is nothing but perennial misery and starvation ever grimly stalking in the squalor of his dark cabin. His children perish before his eyes through the effects of starvation and disease. The sight bleeds his heart and dazes his mind, but he is unable to help them. How can he when his daily income is only 3d. or 3 annas—a paltry pittance in all conscience—which is hardly sufficient to keep himself, much less a family of children ? Of all the people of India, its peasantry deserve the most sympathetic and generous treatment at the hands of Government. No doubt, measures have been adopted to improve their lot which being mere palliatives, only lessened the agony for the time, but the disease is there—it is getting more and more aggravating. The lecturer has eulogized the grasping land-policy of the Chairman and has argued from the augmentation of land revenue achieved by him that the peasantry is growing in prosperity. Can an argument be more casuistical and disingenuous than this ? It is not difficult, I presume, to get a few drops of blood out of an emaciated person. The Chairman's land-policy has been described as his monumental work. Yes, it is a monument of iniquity and unrighteousness

both in the eyes of God and men, which blemishes the bright escutcheon of England's glory.

Sir, I believe I have traversed the whole ground of Mr. Firebrand's address. I believe I have shown how unjust, unwarranted and uncharitable is the charge of sedition and disloyalty against the Congress. Who can, in the face of the observations made by me, imperfect, incomplete and superficial as they are, deny that the Congress is composed of a body of loyal and law-abiding subjects, whose object is to ventilate the grievances of their country, and to demand from Government those rights and privileges which are theirs, both as men and as British subjects, and to claim the removal of those fetters, which stunt their national growth, impoverish their country, insult their patriotism, and are thus calculated to sow broadcast the seeds of dissatisfaction, resentment and anger, aye, of hatred and disloyalty, which may shake one day the Empire to its very foundation ?

It is a copy-book maxim fit for school-boys, not for statesmen, to say that India which has been won by the sword, can be retained by the sword. It is needless for me to go into the controversial question whether India has really been won by the sword. I will concede that it

has been won by the sword. But the question is whether it can always be retained by the sword. I have very great admiration for the British soldier, but brave as he is it is too much to expect of him to vanquish the wrath of a nation of 300 millions. Great English statesmen realized this, and therefore they laid down for the Government of India a policy not founded upon the valour of the British arms, but upon the invulnerable rock of justice, sympathy and righteousness. They recognized the wisdom of applying to India those political axioms, which have made England great; they foresaw the safety of the Empire in the contentment of its people. The muzzling of the press, the embargo upon the freedom of speech and writing, and the disdainful disregard of Indian opinion and sentiment were loathful to them. These are but the weapons of degenerate statesmen, the horizon of whose judgment is narrowed by a racial prejudice and self-interestedness. Unfortunately that race of wise and broad-minded administrators is disappearing fast. It is this which all true lovers of the British rule in India deplore most. Some of our present officials are very touchy and suspicious. Things said to them with the best of intentions and in all sincerity to indicate the pitfalls and blemishes

of the Administration are considered by them as the outpourings of disloyalty. Unfortunately, some of them have lost their appetite for naked truth, and relish a dish of lies and hypocrisy made savoury with the spice of their unstinted encomium and flattery.

Sir, I protest against the application of sections 124A and 153A as advocated by Mr. Popgun and Mr. Bungling Blowhard. Both those sections are very wide and elastic, and almost every political speech and writing can be brought within their purview. It, therefore, behoves Government to accord sanction for prosecution under those sections in very rare and exceptional cases. I do not mean to suggest that the Government are not careful, but there seems to have now come over them a spirit of intolerance of criticism which may soon impel them to institute such prosecutions more frequently than now. Moreover, it is unsafe for the liberty of the subjects and impartial administration of justice that magistrates should have been empowered to try and dispose of cases under sections 124A and 153A. Nice questions of construction of documents, and the aim and object of a writer or a speaker, and the various degrees of latitude of expression appropriate to different kinds of writing and different occasions are

bound to arise in these cases, which are beyond the depths of the magistrates and cannot be safely entrusted to them. Almost invariably the magistrates will be influenced by the fact of the sanction for prosecution having been accorded by Government, imagining that Government would not have accorded it if not convinced of the guilt. In any case, most of them would not venture to give their decision counter to the opinion formed by Government. The proper *forum* for the trial of these cases is a Sessions Court in a District or a High Court in a Presidency Town. The judges of these Courts are infinitely better qualified to try these cases than magistrates. Moreover, a judge of the Sessions Court will have two assessors to aid him, and a judge of the High Court a jury of nine persons. It will be ever so much better for the efficient dispensation of justice to have jurymen instead of assessors in the Sessions Court for the trial of political offences. Government will be amply protected, for a Sessions Judge is not bound to accept a verdict of the jury even when unanimous, and in case of a disagreement between him and the jury, the proceedings in the case are sent up to the High Court for disposal. Then, in the case of a trial by a judge and jury in the High Court, the judge

is not bound to accept the verdict of the jury unless it is unanimous. Thus in both cases ample protection will be afforded to Government, and public fear of a miscarriage of justice will be materially allayed. Besides, a portion of the jurymen being Indians will be in a position to appreciate the articles and speeches complained of if they happen to be in a vernacular language, and thus materially help both the judge and their fellow-jurymen in the trial of the case. Of all cases, those in which political offences are involved are most pre-eminently fitted to be tried by juries.

Sir, political offenders ought not to be manacled like felons. Manacles are intended for dacoits, burglars and murderers, and the use of them in the case of political offenders is an act of contemptible meanness and vindictiveness. Government, I am sure, will not stultify itself by a revengeful spirit, and fail to curb the misguided zeal of Mr. Popgun and his like. Unnecessary hardship and incivility in the case of political offenders will not fail to arouse the indignation of the populace, and a crown of martyrdom will be placed upon their heads.

Sir, India has not to dread Russia or any foreign foe, so much as Anglo-Indians of the type of Sir Grasping Grabber, Mr. Numskull Firebrand, Mr. Polemic Popgun and Mr.

Bungling Blowhard. If ever she is lost to England, which God forbid, it will be through the blazing indiscretion, astounding conceit, supercilious *hauteur* and blind prejudice of men like them. May such men learn wisdom and renounce spurious doctrines. May they ever bear in mind the words of the Queen which seem to be words of divine inspiration. "It is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful ministry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant unto us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

It is, Sir, the fulfilment of these words which the Congress demands. Don't say, you Englishmen, that they are not capable of fulfilment. In them lies the essence of true statesmanship, which will make your rule in India everlasting to the mutual advantage of both countries, and to the glory and greatness of England." (Prolonged applause from the Indians and some Anglo-Indians to the great vexation of Sir Grasping and his companions.)



Mr. Constancio Upright followed Rustim. He said :—“Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I should like to say a few words. I concur most heartily in the remarks made by the last speaker. There is a great deal of discontentment created in India by the indifference, distrust, shortsightedness and selfishness displayed by some of our countrymen there. I regret it very much. The people of India have a most responsive heart, which throbs with gratitude even at small acts of kindness. They are genuinely grateful to us for what we have done for them, and I am sure they will repay our kindness a hundredfold if we treat them as our fellow-subjects, our equals and not inferiors, and repose confidence in their sense of honour, gratitude and loyalty. We are a Christian Nation, and the practice of Christian virtues and Christian principles will enable us to fight a hundred Russias single-handed.” (Loud and prolonged cheering from Indians and some Anglo-Indians, and hisses from Sir Grasping and his distinguished friends.)

Mr. Bagla Bhagat spoke next. He said :—“Mr. Chairman and Gentleman,—I am a native of India.” (“There’s no chance of a mistake. Go on. It is getting late,” shouted an Indian.) “Well, I rejoice that I am a native of



India and a most loyal subject of her Majesty the Queen-Empress, over whose wide dominions the sun never sets. The Congresswallas are mischief-makers and talk rank sedition. In the days of the Moguls or the Mahrathas they would have been ordered to be hanged, drawn and quartered. But under the benign British Rule they are allowed to speak their minds freely and attack Government also. They do not represent the people of India at all. It is a falsehood to say that they do. Here you have a living instance. They do not represent your humble servant. The British Government is a most paternal Government, and the British officials are toiling hard in India to promote the welfare of the people. The cultivators in India are poor, but it is their own fault. They spend a lot of money on weddings and funerals, and by their extravagance fall into the clutches of money-lenders who are veritable Shylocks. What wrong is there then in diverting the money from the pockets of those Shylocks into those of Government? Government must have a revenue. Without it, it can do nothing. Surely, some one must pay the piper for the melodious tune of order, peace and contentment which sounds from the grand organ of Government. The British administration is an ideal administration, and suits the genius of

the people admirably. Sir, the officials are the 'ma baps'\* of the people. To praise them would be like an attempt to gild burnished gold. I think the learned lecturer hit the right nail when he said that the people of India being under the tutelage of Great Britain, the officials had the right to determine what was good for India. I go a step further and say that they have the right to see for the Indians, feel for the Indians, hear for the Indians, speak for the Indians, think for the Indians and judge for the Indians. It is a providential tutelage.

Sir, I endorse and endorse most cordially each and every word—words which would have done credit even to Socrates—that has fallen from the lips of the learned lecturer, whose name has become a household word in India as has been justly and truly said by that illustrious and invincible journal, the *Bagpipe Chronicle*, which is a mirror of Anglo-Indian and Native views, and is an immaculate fountain of justice, wisdom and sagacity. (The Indians hissed; some Anglo-Indians smiled a dubious smile; Sir Grasping looked majestic; Mr. Firebrand almost fell out of the chair in a fit of ecstasy, and Mr. Bungling Blowhard decided to blow a prodigious note of praise of Mr. Bagla Bhagat in the *Bagpipe Chronicle*.)

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\* Parents.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman was then proposed, seconded and unanimously carried. Mr. Firebrand stepped up to Mr. Bagla Bhagat, shook him by the hand and said: "I congratulate you upon your loyalty and patriotism. I'll see if you can't be made a Khan Bahadoor and a Justice of the Peace, and, if possible, a Fellow of the University and a Member of the Corporation. I'll try. I have still many friends in India."

Mr. Bagla Bhagat thanked Mr. Firebrand for his kindness, and bowing to him in a most servile manner withdrew.

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About six weeks passed. Rustim was in the parlour of his residence at Highbury Hill, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Indian Mails, which were overdue. 'Rat-tat-tat' went the postman's knock, and Rustim ran to the door and felt pleasure at seeing his parent's letter. He read it, and then opened a copy of the *Bagpipe Chronicle* which had arrived by the same mail. He was surprised to read the following article in it headed "THE PRETENSIONS OF THE CONGRESS DEMOLISHED. A MOST SEDITIOUS SPEECH BY AN INDIAN STUDENT IN

ENGLAND. URGENCY OF EFFECTUAL MEASURES TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF SUCH A DISGRACEFUL EXHIBITION." "We feel it our duty to impress upon Indian parents the advisability of restraining their sons studying in England from meddling with politics. Young men are sent to England at a considerable expense to acquire proficiency in their respective professions and not fritter away their valuable time in arrogantly presuming to teach Englishmen what their duties are towards India and what they should do to promote the welfare of India. These striplings of Indian youths are amusing when they parade their juvenile learning before an English audience, but become positively intolerable when they talk rank and perfidious sedition as was done at a meeting held in Westminster Hall a little over a fortnight ago under the able chairmanship of Sir Grasping Grabber, K. C. I. E., C. S. I., the author of the model fiscal policy which we possess. The subject before the meeting was the 'Indian National Congress,' and Mr. Numskull Firebrand, C. I. E., was the lecturer. Very great enthusiasm prevailed on account of the importance of the subject, and the Hall was full to overflowing long before the time appointed for the meeting. The Anglo-Indians mustered strong, and a few M. P.'s were also

present. The lecturer, in the course of a stirring speech, laid bare the fallacy of the Congress propaganda and completely demolished its vile pretensions. The speech was replete with facts and figures and the chain of reasoning was simply perfect. There were no vain attempts at rhetoric, but the heart of the speaker was bestirred and found expression in a simple but caustic language, which appealed both to the heart and reason of the audience. There were some capital home thrusts made by the speaker, who described the Congress as "a dynamo of sedition and unrest which charges the Indian public with a strong current of discontent and disaffection and incites them to rebellion." We subscribe to this opinion. The Congress is a hydra-headed monster and we congratulate Mr. Firebrand for dealing out a stunning blow to it. He has rendered even in his retirement a most excellent service to the British Empire and especially to India, and we hold him up as a pattern worthy of imitation by our Anglo-Indian readers.

A law-student whose name is Mr. Rustim B——, but who regales in the sobriquet of Russy, made a most puerile effort to defend the Congress from the withering fusillade of the lecturer. We regret that in this effort he

was countenanced by a handful of Indian hooligans, who cheered him most enthusiastically at almost every stage of his speech, thus converting the meeting into a bear-garden. We urge upon the educated natives the necessity of learning good manners which are indispensable in every civilized society. Mr. Rustim inflicted on the meeting a most lengthy harangue, couched in the most bombastic language imaginable, which eclipsed the rhetorical efforts of the Baboos of Bengal. We do not find in his long speech a single sentence or a single thought worthy of reproduction here, and we should have passed it over in contemptuous silence but for the fact that it was a concoction of mendacious falsehood and spiced with rank sedition and disloyalty. The burden of Mr. Rustim's declamation was that the reins of Government should be entrusted to the Natives and that Englishmen should leave India forthwith. We are not certain whether Mr. Rustim does not require us to hand over our goods, chattels and personal effects also. But we Englishmen have a solemn duty to discharge in this country, for has not God Almighty placed under our care and protection millions of dumb human beings?

We regret that Mr. Rustim's speech was a disgraceful exhibition of disloyalty and sedition.

and steps should be taken forthwith to prevent a recurrence of such effusions in future, as Englishmen at home are likely to be misled by them. We urge upon the Government of India to make section 124A applicable to sedition preached abroad. We are not sure, but we think that under the Indian Penal Code a Native of India is amenable to the jurisdiction of our Law Courts for offences committed by them elsewhere. Be that as it may, the matter must be placed beyond all doubt by extending section 124A as stated above.

We cannot here refrain from expressing our sense of shame and anger at Mr. Constancio Upright, who endorsed Mr. Rustim's remarks. Such conduct on the part of an ex-District and Sessions Judge is intolerable. We must beware of traitors in our own camp.

However, the sombre sky was not without a streak of sunshine. A highly patriotic and loyal speech was made by Mr. Bagla Bhagat, a young Indian gentleman of great promise. There was in his speech a vein of gratitude, a high ideal and loftiness of purpose which were refreshing after the flagetious tirade of Mr. Rustim. Mr. Bagla Bhagat described the officials as the '*Ma baps*'\* of the people—a graceful but by no means a lavish encomium.

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\* Parents.

The speech was remarkable for its moderation, elegance of diction and close logic. We predict a bright future for Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

There is one matter, which, in justice to ourselves, we must refer to here. Some of our contemporaries out of sheer jealousy have questioned the right of this journal to be recognized as the loadstar of Anglo-Indian journalism. To them we may point out the thunderous applause with which the appellation was greeted at the meeting. Merit is bound to rise to the surface, in spite of disingenuous attempts to depress it by a bushel of malevolent lies. We commend the last observation to the serious consideration of some of our contemporaries."

As soon as Rustim read the article, he flung the paper on a table and ejaculated "Blowhard is a cad. I will beard the lion in his own den." So saying, he left the house for Brunswick Square where Mr. Blowhard had engaged rooms.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?" said Mr. Blowhard with a stiff bow to Rustim.

"Sir, you have defamed me in your journal by charging me with sedition and disloyalty. It is a most wicked lie," remarked Rustim shaking with rage.



“It is not a lie,” replied Mr. Blowhard frigidly.

“May I know what your definition of sedition is?” inquired Rustim.

“Certainly,” was the reply. Mr. Blowhard defined sedition thus:—“Whoever by words, either spoken or intended to be read, or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise excites the people of India to demand by whatsoever constitutional means from the Government of Great Britain and Ireland or from the Government established by law in British India, the fulfilment of the promise contained in the Proclamation of her Majesty the Queen, or any share howsoever reasonable and proper in the administration of the Government of the country, thereby encroaching upon the preserves of the bureaucracy, shall be guilty of sedition.”

“This is not what the Penal Code says although the definition of sedition in it is drastic,” observed Rustim.

“If it is not, it ought to be so,” replied Mr. Blowhard.

“Don’t you think you do a great deal of harm to the British Rule in India by perverting truth and misrepresenting the people of India both to Government and Anglo-Indians?” questioned Rustim.

"All I can say is that we agree to differ," replied Mr. Blowhard.

"Look here, Mr. Blowhard. You possess great influence and power. If you but wield them impartially and dispassionately, and hold the balance even between Anglo-Indians and Indians you will confer a great boon on the country. Let there be an effort to unite Indians and Anglo-Indians not in name but in reality, let there be an affectionate brotherhood between the two races, and India will become radiant with the glow of contentment and prosperity in the near future," said Rustim pleadingly, but it seemed to produce no effect upon Mr. Blowhard.

At length Rustim said: "Sir, I mean to write to your journal to refute the charge of sedition you have wrongly laid at my door. I hope, you will, in justice to me, publish my letter."

"No," was the laconic answer.

"Why not?" interrogated Rustim.

"Because it would be against the policy of the paper. We publish only such letters from correspondents as are in consonance with our policy, the others we consign to the waste paper basket," replied Mr. Blowhard.

"Confound your policy. A one-eyed journal is a curse," said Rustim half in anger and half in despair. He then left.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE TABERNACLE.

IT was a Sunday. The late Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, which has since been destroyed by fire, was full to overflowing. Rustim went there to hear the great preacher. Beside him was seated in a pew a young lady of striking beauty. The service commenced, but as Rustim had not a hymn-book he felt a little awkward. The young lady noticing it offered to share her book with him. Rustim gratefully accepted the kind offer. The service was simply grand. There was no organ accompaniment. Still, the hymns were sung with precision and feeling, and the climax was reached when 'The Rock of Ages cleft for me' was sung by the vast congregation. Mr. Spurgeon then preached a sermon. What a magnificent sermon it was! It captivated the congregation by its simplicity, earnestness and devotion. There was no pedantry at learning, or an attempt at artificial rhetoric on the part of the speaker. Words of truth and wisdom, of purity, virtue and greatness flowed from his lips in a pellucid stream which rose

and fell rythmically with the feelings which dominated him in the service of his great Master. He was aglow with spiritual fervour, and electrified the audience who heard him with wrapt attention. It was not possible for any one to remain in his presence unmoved by his persuasive eloquence and the nobility of his character. A religion which has such a preacher to expound it has never to fear a decline.

The service was over. 'Pitter patter, pit pat' down came the rain. Oh! the fickleness of the English weather. Only an hour before the sky was beautifully bright and clear. The young lady had not brought her umbrella, and Rustim was glad to offer his own to her; meanwhile a cab was sighted, hailing which she skipped in, bowing gracefully to him. Rustim intently fixed his gaze upon the receding vehicle, and felt as if all his precious belongings, even his very heart, were carried away from him. He was pierced by the dart of Cupid, and returned home a picture of misery.

"What's the matter with you? You look seedy," remarked Mr. Collins to Rustim, who declined his supper that evening.

"Nothing, I feel a little low-spirited. I'll go to bed. Good-night to all." Saying this, Rustim left the parlour.

“Rustim’s behaviour to-night is exceedingly strange, Martha. There’s something wrong with him,” remarked Mr. Collins to his wife.

“Poor boy ! I am afraid he is home-sick. A good night’s repose will do him good,” said Mrs. Collins.

There was however no sleep for Rustim. He lay thinking of the beautiful young lady, and built a castle in the air for him and her. The clock announced the hour of one. He felt that he was in a Fool’s Paradise and shed warm tears. “Whate’er is the good of my thinking of her ? ” he said to himself. “ There is the accursed gulf of racial prejudice between her and me. Oh ! I wish she was a Parsi or I an Englishman. Will the promised millennium ever come when castes and creeds and racial jealousies and animosities will cease to torment mankind and unite them in one brotherhood as children of the same God ? The nineteenth century has now almost reached its close, but alas ! the civilization of which we love to brag in our supreme egoism is a mere veneer. It is useless to repine. I must try and forget her. Time will efface her image from my heart and mind.”

He then closed his eyes determined to sleep, but the nymph-like figure of the girl

continued floating before his mind. After all he slept, but was soon in a dreamland. When he awoke next morning his head was as heavy as if he had a nocturnal carouse.

A week passed. On the Sunday following Rustim went again to the Tabernacle, although he had resolved not to go there. At the last moment his determination thawed, overcome by a strong desire to see the young lady. "I will look at her from a distance. There won't be any danger in that," reflected he. It was a very lame excuse for breaking his resolve, but men are full of excuses when they need to ease their conscience. The best of us are dissemblers at times.

The service began. It was a most impressive service, but it was lost upon Rustim, who during the time it lasted, cast wistful glances before and behind him and to his right and left in search of the young lady. But she was not there, and Rustim was stunned with grief. His haggard face alarmed Mrs. Collins, who urged him to consult a physician at once. Rustim remained silent. He knew what his malady was. All the doctors in the world could not have cured him, and the only doctor who could have cured him was not available. He then went to bed, and passed a very sleepless night. For the first time

in his life he wished that he was never born and reproached his fate. The sun of happiness seemed to him to be obscured by a total eclipse.

The next morning he rose with a headache and a slight attack of fever. Still, he went to the Temple Library to read there as usual. Scarcely had he turned over a few pages of a book when his mind wandered to the young lady, and reading became unpleasant. He returned home much earlier than usual, and Miss Collins was alarmed to see him, Mrs. Collins having gone to Croydon for the day.

"You are ill. I'll send for a doctor at once," said Miss Collins, and touched the parlour bell to call Mary up from the kitchen to send her to the doctor.

"No. I don't want a doctor, Miss Collins. There's nothing serious with me," replied Rustim.

"Don't be obstinate. You don't know how haggard you look," rejoined Miss Collins. Then turning to Mary, who had appeared by this time she said: "Mary, fetch Mr. Smith, please. Look sharp." Mary withdrew to execute the errand. Mr. Smith arrived. He was the family doctor of the Collins. He examined Rustim very carefully, and applied the

stethoscope to his chest and lungs over and over again. He was bewildered. The malady was there, but he could not diagnose it in spite of his vast experience. At length he prescribed a tonic, and recommended a change of weather.

"What's the matter with him?" inquired Miss Collins of the doctor in the hall.

"I think there is something preying very heavily upon his mind. He needs complete rest," replied the doctor.

What that something was Miss Collins made up her mind to find out. She made various guesses, but all to no purpose. While in this quandary, she heard a gentle knock at the door and went to open it.

"Maud dear, I am surprised to see you. When did you return from the Continent?" said Miss Collins to Miss Osborne, kissing her affectionately.

"A fortnight ago, dear," was the reply.

"But you wrote from Brussels to say that you wouldn't return to London till next month," said Miss Collins.

"We were obliged to change our programme, uncle being wanted here on some urgent business."



The two young ladies were very great friends, and were immensely delighted to meet each other after an eighteen months' separation occasioned by Miss Osborne having accompanied her uncle on the Continent. They then entered the parlour where Rustim was seated brooding over his grief beside a roaring fire. He stood up at seeing Miss Osborne, and doubted his senses. He thought he was going off his mind.

"Mr. Rustim—Miss Osborne," said Miss Collins in introducing them to each other.

"I had met this gentleman at the Tabernacle on the Sunday before last," said Miss Osborne, betraying an emotion of pleasure.

Rustim bowed.

Soon there was conversation on various topics. Rustim became vivacious and participated in it. His care-worn face shone with joy and his eyes sparkled with satisfaction. No one who had seen him half-an-hour before could have believed that he was the same man. Miss Collins grasped the situation at once. "I have found," reflected she, "the key to the problem which baffled me a while ago. It is Maud who is preying upon Rustim's mind. He met her at the Tabernacle and fell in love with her. Maud, too, loves him. The only difference

between them is that one is conscious of the passion, the other is not. It is a case of love at first sight."

"Miss Osborne, you weren't at the Tabernacle yesterday. I looked for you," remarked Rustim in a half-reproachful and half-rueful tone.

"Did you? How very good of you. But I couldn't go. I was so sorry," replied Miss Osborne, with genuine regret stamped on her face.

"Ah! I see. That was the reason why Rustim was so cut up last night," mused Miss Collins. "How happy he looks now. He is in the paradise of love in the presence of his great priestess. I'll see if I cannot help him. Maud and he will make an excellent pair."

The afternoon was spent most agreeably, and Miss Osborne rose to go home after tea.

"I should have liked to go with you as far as the tram, but father will be home soon. Mr. Rustim will go with you, if you don't mind," said Miss Collins, with a view to afford Rustim an opportunity to walk alone in the company of his sweetheart.

"I don't mind it, dear," came the quick reply.

And Rustim and Miss Osborne walked to the tram, both feeling pleasure at being thus thrown into each other's company.

The temperature of Rustim's hilarity and sprightliness climbed down prodigiously when he returned home. Still, sufficient of it was left, and both Mr. and Mrs. Collins were delighted to see a sudden change for the better in him. This they ascribed to the invigorating tonic prescribed by Dr. Smith, of which, by the way, Rustim had not sipped a drop. Miss Collins knew what other tonic had effected the miraculous change, but she held silence.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## A TEA PARTY AT KENSINGTON

MISS OSBORNE was the only child of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Osborne of the Indian Medical Service. Her mother was the daughter of a high official in Bengal. Both her parents died when she was about seven years old, and she was consequently taken care of by her maternal uncle, Sir Augustus Goodfellow, K. C. S. I., a retired Civilian of very great distinction and attainments. Sir Augustus was a septuagenarian, kind, generous and broad-minded. He was very much attached to his niece who was all in all to him, his wife and only son having died.

There was a stir in their residence at Kensington. Miss Collins, Rustim and Mr. Volatile Gaspot, a barrister practising in India and the eldest son of a cousin of Sir Augustus, were invited to tea.

Miss Osborne was in high spirits. She did not know why. Miss Collins and Rustim arrived together, and Miss Osborne's heart involuntarily fluttered at seeing the latter. There was a radiant corona of love on her brow which did not escape the sharp eye of Miss Collins, who smiled a smile of satisfaction,

for there was nothing which made her more happy than to see her friend happy.

The trio was engaged in confabulating, but most of the conversation took place between Miss Osborne and Rustim, Miss Collins having purposely absorbed herself in turning over the pages of an illustrated magazine. Half an hour had elapsed when Mr. Gaspot was announced. He had a swaggering style and was unduly conscious of his importance as a rising barrister who had already made a lot of money. At seeing Rustim talking familiarly to Miss Osborne he felt annoyed. "D——n that nigger. What impertinence! Shouldn't I like to kick him?" growled he to himself. But before he could anathematize further, Sir Augustus, who had been suddenly called away from home on some urgent business in the morning, arrived. Sir Augustus apologized to all for keeping them waiting, and shook hands with Rustim and Mr. Gaspot, and kissed his niece and Miss Collins, whom he had known from her childhood and regarded with affection. They then sat down to tea which had been somewhat belated.

"My dear Volatile, how is dear old India?" affectionately inquired Sir Augustus of his guest, who had arrived home only a week before on a holiday.

"Her Ladyship is in distress," replied Mr. Gaspot.

"How is that?" asked Sir Augustus, a little alarmed.

"There is rank sedition and high treason in the country. The Government must now be on the alert and not show weakness. Judicial trials must be dispensed with, and men suspected of sedition deported out of the country, without a trial, under Act III of 1818," said Mr. Gaspot vehemently.

"You horrify me. What barbarity do you talk! I was in India for forty years and had seen most troublous times. Still the Act of 1818 was never enforced. That enactment is a stain upon our legislation, a disgrace to our civilization and a shame to our noble religion," said Sir Augustus reproachingly.

"*Audi alteram partem*," interposed Rustim. "There is discontentment and dissatisfaction in India, but sedition and treason there are none. The Indians are loyal, but strain not their loyalty unduly. If there are any seditionists and traitors, place them by all means before the *forum* of the country, prove their guilt and get them convicted. A fair and square trial will not fail to evoke admiration and praise. But think not of smuggling men out of the country without a trial and without

a hearing. This Russian method is revolting to the Indian feelings. It is execrable, barbarous and inhumane. So have we been taught by Englishmen themselves. Let not our preceptors therefore go wrong, I beseech."

"Well said," ejaculated Sir Augustus.

"I suppose you are a Baboo. You talk the usual Baboo cant," remarked Mr. Gaspot to Rustim.

"I am a Parsi, although I regret your contemptuous reference to the Bengalees," replied Rustim.

"The Parsis are a most loyal people," interposed Sir Augustus.

"Exactly," remarked Rustim. "We Parsis owe our greatness, our prosperity, in fact our very existence to the British Rule, whose downfall may mean our ruination and lifelong servitude. As a friend I must be candid. A harsh and unrighteous measure would bespeak weakness, not strength on the part of Government."

"Right, Mr. Rustim, quite right," ejaculated Sir Augustus. "Fair-play, sympathy, generosity and righteousness must always be the keystone of the British administration in India."

"Sir, are there not Extremists in India?" snarled Mr. Gaspot.

"Unfortunately there are, as in every other country including England. But they are of your own creation," replied Rustim.

"Why?" rejoined Mr. Gaspot.

"Because not a few of you pooh-pooh the legitimate aspirations of the people, scoff at their ideals, suspect them of disloyalty and treat them with discourtesy, if not downright contempt," observed Rustim. "Sympathy, justice and generosity will dwindle the number of the Extremists; harsh and repressive measures will greatly augment it. This is but an eternal truth which no statesman can deny."

"I am afraid English statesmanship is deteriorating fast in India," remarked Sir Augustus. "I am afraid the Rulers are not in touch with the Ruled as they ought to be. It is, I believe, due to the Suez Canal and the facility of travelling. Nowadays Englishmen seem to have no heart in India. Directly they set their foot in that country they think of returning home as early as they can. In my time a voyage took months, and we stayed in the country for years together, and tried to know the people and learn their wishes. It is all topsy-turvy now."



“ You have hit the right nail, sir,” remarked Rustim.

“ Uncle, haven’t we talked enough about India? May we now have some music? ” put in Miss Osborne.

“ Certainly, my dear,” was the reply.

And music began. All sang, including Sir Augustus who was a lover of music, but no one could approach Miss Osborne, whose singing was divine and pianoforte-playing excellent. All were delighted to listen to her. Miss Collins and Rustim then left. Mr. Gaspot remained behind.

“ May I have the pleasure of your company to see ‘ The Sweet Lavender ’ to-morrow night? It is a capital performance,” said Mr. Gaspot to Miss Osborne.

“ Thank you very much, but I have promised to go to Albert Hall with Miss Collins and Mr. Rustim. Madam Adelina Patti is to sing there,” replied Miss Osborne.

Mr. Gaspot was disconcerted. He had made sure that Miss Osborne would accompany him, and had engaged two seats at the Theatre in anticipation. He left, mentally swearing at Rustim to whom he attributed his disappointment.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## MR. GASPOT IN LOVE.

“**W**HAT a fine girl is Maud Osborne! She is a perfect beauty and will shine anywhere,” ruminated Mr. Gaspot a few days after the tea-party at Sir Augustus Goodfellow’s. “I love her. Oh! I love her. I must return to India a quadruped instead of a biped as the Natives would say. But d——n that nigger. He is sweet on the girl. I noticed it very plainly the other day. However, there is no fear. Maud Osborne is English—English in taste, English in judgment, English in beauty, English in refinement, and English in elegance. There is pure Anglo-Saxon blood flowing in her veins. Will she hearken to him? No, never. The fellow won’t dare to pop the question to her.”

Mr. Gaspot was thus satisfied in his mind that his way was clear, and that Miss Osborne would surrender her heart to him without much ado. As a preliminary he sent to her a basket of flowers which she accepted, and wrote to him to say that both she and her uncle would be very pleased if he would dine with them in the evening. The letter delighted Mr. Gaspot.

immensely, as his vanity saw in it a counter-move to win him. "Ah! my young lady, you then stoop to conquer me," he chuckled, and added with a leer, "Volatile, my boy, your looks are a passport to the heart of any woman in Christendom. How very lucky!"

Mr. Gaspot proceeded to Kensington in the evening. *En route* he purchased a very costly ring to slip on Miss Osborne's finger that very evening, if practicable. He believed in a theatrical effect and wished to show Miss Osborne how very thoughtful and clever he was.

Kensington was reached. Miss Osborne was dressed magnificently, and Mr. Gaspot's heart bounded with joy at seeing her. "She is a 'peri' as the Natives would say, so very perfect and angelic," mused Mr. Gaspot. "But why this magnificent attire to-night! I know. She is determined to make her conquest. Clever girl! But she cannot deceive a lawyer, eh!"

"How very kind of you to have sent me the basket. The flowers are lovely. I do love them so much," said Miss Osborne to Mr. Gaspot going with him towards the table in the drawing-room on which the basket was laid.

"I knew you would like them. Rose is your favourite," replied Mr. Gaspot, who, then

noticing a chrysanthemum nestling on her loving bosom, remarked, "You are changeable, Miss. You have dethroned rose and installed chrysanthemum. How is that?"

Miss Osborne blushed, but made no reply. Intuitively she pressed the flower close to her heart as if to save it from an inquisitive gaze.

"I did not know that the girl was a born Ellen Terry," mused Mr. Gaspot. "She plays her part remarkably well, but she cannot hoodwink a barrister. She has worn the chrysanthemum on purpose. It is my favourite flower, she knows."

The dinner was announced. Sir Augustus was as jolly as usual. The dinner over, Miss Osborne adjourned into the drawing-room, leaving Sir Augustus and Mr. Gaspot behind. Ten minutes had scarcely elapsed when the Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy was announced.

"That man is a great nuisance, Volatile. It's a most unreasonable hour to call. Still, I will see him." So saying, Sir Augustus went to the library, and Mr. Gaspot proceeded to the drawing-room.

"Where's uncle?" inquired Miss Osborne of Mr. Gaspot.

"He is in the library. Mr. Puffy has called to see him," replied Mr. Gaspot.

“Poor uncle! He will be badgered with the Asian Mission and the conversion of pariahs for at least an hour. But uncle is good-natured,” remarked Miss Osborne.

“I should kick that fellow out as I once kicked a Native presuming to travel with me in the same first-class carriage,” said Mr. Gaspot.

“Shame!” ejaculated Miss Osborne indignantly. “Is this the way you behave towards our Indian fellow-subjects? Mr. Rustim was right the other day in saying that discontentment and disaffection in India were of our own creation. Conduct such as yours must be taken serious notice of by Government, and Society must brand it with strong condemnation.”

“My dear Miss Osborne, you are unduly severe. The *Bagpipe Chronicle* will make you a convert, I am sure, if you but read it. It is a capital journal, and would create a hullabaloo if Government interfered,” replied Mr. Gaspot.

“Then we Englishmen and women must appeal to the Parliament and stand by our Indian fellow-subjects, for do they not owe allegiance to our Sovereign and our Flag?” said Miss Osborne vehemently.

Mr. Gaspot saw that he had blundered egregiously. He had aroused the ire of that spirited Englishwoman. He therefore gave a turn to the subject and talked of music of which she was very fond, and when she had softened down he said, "What a lovely chrysanthemum you are wearing?"

"It *is* lovely. Isn't it?" remarked Miss Osborne, casting affectionate glances at it.

"May I have it?" said Mr. Gaspot, feeling confident that his request would be complied with.

"No," replied Miss Osborne, arresting the extended hand of Mr. Gaspot.

Mr. Gaspot was flabbergasted, for had he not thought that the chrysanthemum had been worn as a compliment to him?

"O! do let me have it, I shall treasure it all my life. Maud dear, you don't know how much I love you." So saying, the rising young barrister of India fell on his knees.

"Mr. Gaspot, you surprise me," remarked Miss Osborne.

"Oh! Miss Osborne, my happiness depends upon you. I love you," said Mr. Gaspot entreatingly.

"I implore you not to speak to me thus."

“Give me some hope, Maud. Haven’t we always been very great friends?”

“I value your friendship, but I can hold out no hope.”

“*Dum Spiro Spero* is my motto,” said Mr. Gaspot, imagining that this would soften Miss Osborne’s heart. He then added, “Give me that flower, Maud, at least for the sake of our old friendship. I shall treasure it all my life.”

“I am sorry I cannot. It is a present to me,” replied Miss Osborne.

“I suppose it is from Mr. Rustim,” frowned Mr. Gaspot.

“Yes,” replied Maud, colouring.

“Then you love him, that Indian dog,” remarked Mr. Gaspot contemptuously.

“I don’t love him. But you have no right to insult my friend,” replied Miss Osborne indignantly.

“That man is a cad. Beware of him. He has hypnotised you. A most lovely girl in England will be victimized. Alas!” said Mr. Gaspot, boiling with rage.

“Sir, how dare you insult me. Mr. Rustim is a gentleman,” said Miss Osborne wrathfully, and swept out of the room.

110

## CHAPTER XV.

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### A REVELATION.

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“I AM in love. I love Rustim. Mr. Gaspot was not wrong there. How stupid of me not to have seen it before?” soliloquized Miss Osborne, sitting on the edge of her bed. Then she took the chrysanthemum from her bosom and pressed it to her lips, saying “It is my darling’s first gift.” She kissed it again and tears stole down her cheeks. They were tears of happiness. The dawn of love had unmistakably opened on her.

That night she slept. It was a most delicious sleep, in which the mind feasted in the dreamland of love, the slim, tall, dark figure of Rustim wafting the zephyr of happiness.

The next morning she woke and kissed the chrysanthemum. This may appear inane sentimentalism. Dear reader, defer judgment till you are caught in the meshes of Cupid.

“Isn’t it a glorious morning?” said she to her uncle, kissing him affectionately by way of



salutation in the parlour. Both then sat down to breakfast.

“Maud, I cannot understand Mr. Puffy. He is either a fool or a knave,” remarked Sir Augustus sipping his coffee.

“I should say both, uncle,” returned Miss Osborne.

“Well, he came to ask me to help the Asian Mission. He said that there was disaffection in India, and that the remedy lay in the propagation of Christianity.”

“Absurd,” ejaculated Miss Osborne.

“It *is* absurd,” emphasised Sir Augustus. “I told Mr. Puffy so, but he would not listen. He talked of the Christian armour, Christian bombardment, Christian forceps, and Christian what not.”

“What’s the remedy, uncle dear? I feel interested in India,” said Miss Osborne.

“I am glad to hear it, child. Every man and woman in Great Britain ought to do so. Our Government of India, good as it is, is bureaucratic after all, and needs constant vigilance on our part. The people of India have a right to appeal to our sense of justice and honour, and we must rise to the occasion. Well, the first step we ought to take is to urge

the Ministry to appoint a Royal Commission at once to investigate the source or sources of the present disaffection. I would not have either Indians or Anglo-Indians on that Commission. The Commission must consist of English statesmen of broad, sympathetic and generous views who shall hear not only Anglo-Indians, official and unofficial, but Indians of all political creeds, including the Extremists."

"Uncle! Mr. Rustim condemned the Extremists the other day," said Miss Osborne.

"True, but the Commission must examine them too to arrive at a correct conclusion," replied Sir Augustus.

"Will the Commission restore contentment?" inquired Miss Osborne.

"Yes, provided the Commission is not a mockery and the reforms which may be suggested by it are carried out faithfully," replied Sir Augustus.

"Will not a Council of Notables serve the purpose better as suggested in some quarters?"

A Council of *Not-Ables*, if you please. A Council of the lame, the halt and the blind—a piece of political legerdemain invented to hoodwink the British Democracy, which is in favour of introducing reforms in India.

It is suggested that the Council should be composed of Native Princes and territorial magnates. What a farce! They will only dance to the tune of the bureaucracy. They dare not do anything else. The Native Princes are but birds in gilded cages. Their power, their freedom, their existence depends upon the good-will of the bureaucracy. Moreover, what do they know of the wants, the aspirations and the grievances of the people residing in British India? Nine out of ten among them will be found completely at sea on questions affecting our Indian subjects. As regards the territorial magnates, the less said the better. Most of them are illiterate and innocent of the knowledge of the English language, their interests very often conflicting with those of the masses. A few of them have sat from time to time in the Legislative Councils, but they have seldom shown intelligence, breadth of view or familiarity with the complex problems of administrative reforms. The educated Indians alone represent the masses. It is they who voice their grievances and champion their cause. The so-called Council of Notables would be an insidious attempt to supplant the educated Indians and to set back the hands upon the dial of reform.

There was then a ten minutes' silence, Sir Augustus thinking of India, and Maud of Rustim. At length, Miss Osborne said, "Uncle, I am invited to spend the day with the Collins."

"Ah! I forgot all about it, child," said Sir Augustus starting from his reverie. "Go by all means. The Collins are very nice people."

"We intend going to the City Temple in the evening. Mr. Rustim likes to hear Dr. Parker very much," said Miss Osborne, her beautiful face suffused with the glorious tint of love.

"Dr. Parker is an excellent preacher," remarked Sir Augustus.

And Miss Osborne rose to start for Highbury Hill.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## MAJOR SPOONEY AT POORGUNJ.

MAJOR FLAPDOODLE SPOONEY was reading the *Bagpipe Chronicle* lying straddle-legged in an easy-chair on the verandah of his bungalow at Poorgunj, whither he had resided since his departure from England, his regiment being stationed there.

“D——n Blowhard. He is an infernal nuisance,” exclaimed he, raising his eyes from the paper and knocking the ashes off his cigar. “The fellow is an audacious liar. He misrepresents the natives to Government and Anglo-Indians alike. Fancy him calling Rustim a traitor and sedition-monger. A more loyal, honourable, and temperate man does not live. But this is Blowhard’s way or what he calls his policy. His policy be blowed, and he too in the bargain. A few months ago I should have believed in his trashy rhodomontade. But thanks to Rustim, he opened my eyes. He taught me to study Indians at close quarters. Well, I have done so, and shall continue to do so. The natives are docile, grateful,

lawabiding and loyal. The fault is ours, not theirs."

The Major then contemptuously flung aside the *Chronicle*, which contained Mr. Blowhard's lucubration on the proceedings of the meeting held in Westminster Hall.

"Luximon, toom kaisa hae?\*" asked the Major of the postman, who respectfully salaamed him.

"Accha, Sahab. Apka registeri aya hae,"† replied the postman, handing a packet to the Major.

He opened the letter. It was from Mr. Jones, his wife's solicitor in London, claiming maintenance for a son born to her, and threatening legal proceedings in the event of non-compliance with the demand forthwith.

"D——n the woman. What impertinence! I to maintain her bastard son. No, that cannot be," roared the Major, fuming with rage. A few minutes later, overwhelmed with grief, he muttered, "That woman is the plague of my life. I wish I had never met her. However, I had better consult Hooshier Punt and see what he says."

How are you, Luximon?

† All right, sir. There is a registered packet for you.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### A LEGAL CONUNDRUM.

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MR. HOOSHIAH PUNT was a district pleader in Poorgunj. He was a clever lawyer, and a clever fleecer as well. He knew how to lighten the purse of the people of Poorgunj. Still, he was a very great favourite with them. He was their friend, guide and philosopher. In him they had a champion against the transgressions of the police and the idiosyncrasies of the officials.

He was seated in the front room of his house in the Bazaar surrounded by a party of half a dozen persons, who had arrived from a neighbouring village to engage his services.

“Well, what’s the matter?” inquired the lawyer.

“Sir, there is zoolum,\*” said Raghu, the spokesman of the party. “My brother Dhondu has been arrested by Badmash Rao for nothing at all. Dhondu lost his ornaments and complained to the Fouzdar.† The Fouzdar said that the complaint was false and arrested Dhondu.”

“Where were the ornaments kept?” asked the lawyer.

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\* Oppression.

† Chief Constable.

“In a box under key and padlock. The thief made a hole in the wall, entered the house, broke the padlock and abstracted the ornaments from the box. All this took place last night. The complaint was made in the morning, and soon afterwards Dhondu was arrested. Poor man has lost his ornaments and also his ‘abru.’\* What zoolum?”

“The charge is a serious charge,” remarked the lawyer gravely, although he knew fully well that the arrest was illegal, the Chief Constable having no power to arrest Dhondu without a warrant from a magistrate, even assuming the complaint to be false.

“Vishnu Punt,” shouted the lawyer to his clerk, who was squatted on a mat in a corner of the room with a reed pen behind his ear and another in his hand.

“Sir,” answered the clerk.

“Read section 211 of the Penal Code in Marathi,” beckoned the lawyer.

“Very well, sir,” answered the clerk, who chewing ‘pan sopari’† read the section in a sing-song tone. “The punishment is seven years’ rigorous imprisonment and a fine,” iterated the clerk with a solemn pose of the head.

The reading produced a most profound effect upon the party, and Raghu resolved to

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\* Reputation. † Betel-nut and leaves.



pay any fee to save his brother. "I will go into debt, mortgage my fields, but won't let my brother suffer," mused he, his eyes being dimmed with tears.

Mr. Hooshier Punt was not slow to read Raghu's mind. He then demanded his fee.

"How much, Vakeel Saheb?\*" inquired Raghu.

"Three hundred rupees," said Mr. Hooshier Punt, who always began with a thumping fee and eventually closed the bargain for a quarter or less.

"You deserve much more than that. We know your worth. But we are poor, very poor, Vakeel Saheb. Have compassion on us," said three or four men of the party simultaneously.

"Think that you save a cow from the slaughter-house. Think that you work for nothing," said Raghu, touching his head to the ground in supplication.

There was a haggling, and ultimately the fee was settled at Rs. 100 to the satisfaction of both parties.

Clink, clink, sounded Rs. 30, which Raghu produced from a cloth round his waist.

Clink, clink, sounded twenty more coins which some of the party lent to Raghu.

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\* A native attorney.

The money was heaped on the mat before the lawyer, whose eyes twinkled at its sight. The party then rose to borrow the balance of the fee from the Sowkar\* in the Bazaar.

"Come in, sir, come in. Highly delighted to see you, sir, said Mr. Hooshier Punt to Major Flapdoodle Spooney, whose arrival synchronized with the departure of the party.

Major Spooney told his tale of woe to the lawyer, and showed him Mr. Jones' letter.

"I am afraid, sir, the law is against you," remarked the lawyer. "The child is yours according to law."

"Why?" inquired the Major, looking aghast. "I have not seen the woman for ten months."

"Let me count the exact period you have been away from her. It is 299 days. That is not enough," replied the lawyer.

"I am as certain as I am alive that the child is not mine," said the Major.

"You may not be the *de facto* father, but you are the *de jure* father of the child. That is enough. The responsibility is yours," replied the lawyer.

The Major cursed the law and the Legislature, and withdrew.

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\* Money-lender.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CUPID'S DART.

“**R**USTIM is pining. He is not the Rustim of old. What a changelove has wrought in him. He is fretting for nothing at all. Maud is within his reach. He has only to pop the question to her. But he is shy and sensitive. These are his drawbacks. I must play a bolder game than before. Rustim and Maud are destined for each other,” soliloquized Miss Collins in the parlour beating an egg-flip for Rustim, who was feeling dejected and had not touched food in the morning.

At this juncture, poor Rustim was reclining on a sofa in the drawing-room upstairs, overwhelmed with despondency. “Maud, dear Maud, you are a Nature’s peeress, wearing the coronet of beauty, loveliness and grace. What right have I to think of you? Kind and good you are to me, I know; but kindness is your nature, goodness is your heart and purity is your soul. You are far, far above me. It is madness for me to think of you. Still, I cannot help but love you, my darling. The flame will always burn within me. Let my heart—my ignited heart—be burnt out completely and my life consumed to ashes, but no

confession of love shall escape my lips. I cannot, I will not, wound the feelings of my darling," said he to himself overcome with emotion, and his eyes moistened.

"Drink this. It will do you a lot of good," said Miss Collins, handing the egg-flip to Rustim. She was much moved at seeing tears in his eyes, and added, "You want a change very badly."

"I think I do. But ——," replied Rustim elliptically.

"He does not want to go away from Maud," reflected Miss Collins. "Why can't they both go together? I will try."

"Ma dear, Mr. Rustim needs a change very badly. But he won't go alone. Cannot we all go together?" said Miss Collins to her mother in the evening, Rustim being still in the drawing-room upstairs, moping.

Mrs. Collins fell in with the proposal, and Mr. Collins, who was there, nodded approval.

"Where shall we go to?" asked Miss Collins.

"Brighton, I should say. Mr. Rustim will be delighted to see the sea. He always talks of the Back Bay and Apollo Pier in Bombay," replied Miss Collins.

“Yes child, Brighton is a delightful place. I should like to spend my holiday there,” observed Mr. Collins, and Brighton was selected.

The next morning Miss Collins went to Kensington and invited Miss Osborne to go to Brighton with her.

“I should very much like to go with you, dear, if uncle has no objection,” said Miss Osborne to her friend.

“None at all,” interposed Sir Augustus. “I should very much like you to go, child. Your health causes me a deal of anxiety of late.”

Miss Osborne was delighted, not because she was going to Brighton, which she had seen a dozen times before, but because she would have Rustim’s company a great deal more than at present. Oh, the magnetism of love!

“Mother dear, Maud will go with us, too,” said Miss Collins to her mother, taking off her hat on her return from Kensington.

“The more the merrier. Maud is a charming company,” replied Mrs. Collins.

When Rustim learnt that Maud had consented to go to Brighton, his reluctance to stir out of London disappeared, and he felt happy.

A week later the party proceeded to Brighton.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## A HOLIDAY AT BRIGHTON.

## RUSTIM'S ENGAGEMENT.

THE sight of the sea pleased Rustim immensely. He had not seen the sea since his arrival in England. The Pier and the beach fascinated him, where he sat daily for hours together basking in the warmth of Miss Osborne's love. The Brighton beach is really delightful.

Both Maud and Rustim were very happy. They had long walks daily, Miss Collins always accompanying them of course, but the lace of her shoe got loose, or her handkerchief dropped, or something untoward invariably happened, and she lagged behind. There was no end to her mishaps. How strange!

One day the trio was seated on the beach, Miss Collins a little away from Maud and Rustim. Mr. and Mrs. Collins were promenading, and their little son was bathing his feet in the sea.

"Hark! there is music in the boat yonder," said Miss Osborne to her sweetheart, pointing

her finger in the direction of a boat which was coming towards them.

At first the music was faint and almost inaudible, but became more and more distinct as the boat came nearer and nearer. All eyes on the beach were turned to the boat.

“I think I recognize the voice. It is Mr. Puffy’s,” remarked Rustim. He was not wrong, for the Rev. Mr. Puffy, with half-a-dozen ladies of some antiquity, was singing most enthusiastically—

“Light in the darkness sailor, day is at hand !  
See o’er the foaming billows fair Haven’s land.  
Drear was the voyage, sailor, now almost o’er ;  
Safe within the lifeboat, sailor, pull for the shore !

Pull for the shore sailor ; pull for the shore !  
Heed not the rolling waves, but bend to the oar ;  
Safe in the life-boat, sailor, cling to self no more :  
Leave the poor old stranded wreck, and pull for the shore !

Trust in the life-boat, sailor, all else will fail ;  
Stronger the surges dash, and fiercer the gale ;  
Heed not the stormy winds, though loudly they roar ;  
Watch the “Bright and Morning Star,” and pull for  
the shore !

Bright gleams the morning, sailor ; uplift the eye ;  
Clouds and darkness disappearing, glory is nigh !  
Safe in the life-boat, sailor, sing ever-more—

“Glory, glory, hallelujah !” Pull for the shore !”

At length the boat was hove to, and Mr. Puffy jumped out of it, followed by some ladies,

including the old lady in the white cap, who in her admiration of Mr. Puffy's zeal and eloquence, had made a donation of £20 to the Asian Mission on board the steamer 'Good Hope.' The party had been on a pleasure trip, and Mr. Puffy was beaming through the exhilarating effects of cold fowl, ham sandwiches, jam tartlets and various delicacies which he had stuffed himself with. He had despatched three-fourths of the hamper provided by the old lady in the white cap with an amazing rapidity, saying that the sea-air always gave him an appetite.

"Good afternoon, Miss Osborne; good afternoon, Mr. Rustim. I am delighted to see you both," said the Rev. gentleman raising his hat on seeing them. He and the ladies then came up.

"We had a glorious time on the boat, Miss Osborne. We had a picnic and hymn-singing. We killed two birds with one stone. Didn't we, Miss Muffin?" said Mr. Puffy.

"Yes," simpered the bearer of that name.

"Oh! my friend," said Mr. Puffy to Rustim. "I was glad to see you at the City Temple a few days ago. What do you think of Dr. Parker?"

"He is a great divine," replied Rustim.



“Right. I don’t approve of some of his views though. Do I, Miss Muffin?” said Mr. Puffy, appealing to that lady.

“No,” simpered Miss Muffin.

“You should go to St. Paul’s one day,” said Mr. Puffy to Rustim.

“I have been there many a time,” replied Rustim.

“I am glad to hear it. Persevere, my dear friend. The light of God has at last flooded upon your heathenish mind,” remarked Mr. Puffy. Then he said in an undertone to the old lady in the white cap: “Madam, the seeds sown on board the steamer have germinated at last. My labour has not been in vain. He is already a Christian, or soon will become one. Amen.” He then took leave of Miss Osborne and Rustim. And the old lady in the white cap decided to make a substantial present to Mr. Puffy for his evangelical success.

Miss Osborne had somehow conceived supreme contempt for Mr. Puffy. Therefore, as soon as he and his party were out of sight, she observed to Rustim, “Is not Mr. Puffy a humbug. I hope all European missionaries in India are not like him.”

“Oh dear, no,” returned Rustim. There are some very good men and earnest workers

in their ranks. But they have gained little success after all. India can never become a Christian country—I mean Christian in name, for Christian in spirit it is bound to be with the spread of Western education. The missionaries, I am afraid, have misjudged their sphere of action, as I said to Mr. Puffy on board the ship. They must first try to set their own house in order, and hold the torchlight of Christianity to such of their people in Africa, Australia and America as have been practising atrocities upon the coloured people in those continents.”

“I am afraid, you are right,” said Miss Osborne. “There are also people worse than heathens and pagans, far beyond the pale of Christianity, in Christian Europe itself. An effort must be made to raise their condition. It is the first duty of European missionaries.”

Shortly after, the sun went down the horizon. A strong wind began to blow, and the sea, which had hitherto been calm, began to hiss and lash the beach. There came a sudden change in the weather, and the beach soon became deserted.

It rained that evening, with flashes of lightning and peals of thunder. The Collins were disappointed a little, as they feared the rain might interfere with their arrangement to go to the Devil’s Dyke in the morning. The

disappointment, however, gave zest to their pleasure the next morning, when they saw the glorious orb of the sun in the Eastern horizon in majestic splendour.

They proceeded to the Devil's Dyke in a char-a-banc. The drive was most delightful, the rain overnight having refreshed the fields and meadows. The Devil's Dyke was reached. It commanded a lovely view of the surrounding landscape which filled Rustim with pleasure.

"England is a most beautiful country," mused he. However, by some mysterious process of mental transformation the sight became insipid to him, and the idea that Maud was beyond his reach rushed to his mind again.

"Rustim is in perigee with Maud. But he is a fool. Why does he not speak to her instead of moping?" soliloquized Miss Collins, irritated at noticing the change in Rustim's looks.

"Ada, dear, I should like my fortune to be predicted by that gipsy-woman. There will be some fun, I'm sure," said Miss Osborne to Miss Collins, laughing, and pointing her finger in the direction of a gipsy-woman, who was seated a few paces away offering to predict fortune at 6d. a piece.

Maud then walked up to the gipsy-woman, closely followed by Rustim and Miss Collins.

Her glove came off and her pretty hand was stretched out to have her future unfolded.

“You will marry a dark gentleman, Miss. The marriage will turn out very happy,” said the fortune-teller.

At this Miss Osborne blushed, Miss Collins was amused, and Rustim resolved to declare his love at once.

“Maud dear, let that prophesy come true,” said Rustim to Miss Osborne after they had gained a lonely corner.

Maud’s eyes sparkled with joy, her heart throbbed with delight, and her loving face mutely answered ‘yes.’ Soon she was locked in the arms of Rustim nestling her head against his shoulder, Rustim imbibing the nectar of happiness from her pure and saintly lips. It was the happiest moment of their lives, and they plighted their troth to each other.

## CHAPTER XX.

## A SORROWFUL PARTING.

“MUST you go, darling?” said Miss Osborne to Rustim, who, having been called to the Bar a month previously, had decided to return to India.

“I think I must,” returned Rustim.

“There is no need. I’ve a small fortune of my own. We can live very comfortably upon it. Roos dear, my purse is yours. Don’t you know it? Oh! do not think of leaving me, darling,” said Miss Osborne, looking up to him pleadingly.

“My darling, you are an angel,” replied Rustim, smothering the upturned face with kisses. “You do not know how sad I feel. You do not know what parting means to me. But God has ordained that every one of us must do his duty. I cannot touch your purse. I cannot accept your offer. You are good, bountiful and loving, my sweetie. I thank you for your generosity. But I am a man. I must work for my bread, and not be a burden to you.”

“Your ideal is high; your sense of duty very strict. Still, I won’t interfere with you, dear. I’m sure you will get on in your profession

very quickly, and will fetch me away at the earliest opportunity," said Miss Osborne.

"Most certainly, dear. As soon as I get on a little, I shall come to fetch you away. That happy day won't be more than twelve months hence, my tootsey pootsey," replied Rustim, embracing his dearest in a truly Oriental manner.

Three weeks elapsed, and Rustim was at the Charing Cross station bound for India. Miss Osborne and Miss Collins accompanied him to the station to see him off.

"Good-bye," said Rustim to Miss Collins shaking her warmly by the hand. "I do not know how to express my gratitude to you. You have always been like a kind and good sister to me. May God bless you."

Then turning to Miss Osborne, who was convulsing with grief, he said, "Cheer up, darling. You are a brave little hero. We shall soon meet, never, never to part again. This is but a passing cloud. Glorious weather is in store for us. Did not the gipsy-woman say that we would be very, very happy?"

"Yes, darling. I am sure we shall be happy. But——" Here Miss Osborne broke down completely and tears coursed down her cheeks, although she detested making any exhibition of her feelings.

Rustim who had hitherto struggled valiantly to affect an air of cheerfulness for the sake of his beloved, could wear the mask no longer. The strain was too great for him. He laid his trembling hand round her, and wept.

“Time is up, sir. Get in,” said a porter to Rustim, who kissed his beloved once again and entered the carriage.

“Good-bye, love,” said Rustim.

“Good-bye, dearest,” returned Maud.

And the honest Indian was carried away from his English sweetheart in a twinkling.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## AN ILL-FATED LETTER.

“**W**HAT ails you, child?” remarked Sir Augustus to his niece, who was looking melancholy.

“Nothing particular. I think it is the weather, uncle dear,” replied Miss Osborne, who, to avoid further questioning from her uncle, stole away from his presence.

“It is not the weather. It is something else. I believe it is Volatile, who had called here yesterday. He has fluttered the little bird. Ah! young people are the same in all ages. I will wait and watch,” mused Sir Augustus, whose mind wandered back to his courting-days forty years before.

Sir Augustus was partially right. It was not the weather which distracted Maud. It was the absence of a letter from Rustim. Three months had elapsed since his departure from England. Those three months were like years to Maud. Her only pleasure during that period was a letter from Rustim every week. She anxiously looked out for the arrival of the Indian mails. Rustim wrote affectionate



letters to her every week which cheered her immensely and supplied her with pabulum for happy dreams. But the mails had arrived in the morning, and there was no letter from Rustim. This was the cause of her ailment, not the weather, nor Mr. Volatile Gaspot as Sir Augustus erroneously imagined.

"My darling must be ill, or else he would not fail to write to me," said she with tears in her eyes after she had gained the seclusion of her bedroom, and falling upon her knees she prayed fervently for the safety of her fiancé.

A week wore on. Snow was lying on the ground, and a cold wind was blowing. Maud Osborne walked to the Post Office in spite of the inclement weather, but her heart sank within her when she learnt that the Indian mails had arrived, but that there was no letter for her. She walked back home, the snow pelting and the bitter cold wind lashing her face. She was unconscious of this, the thought of Rustim being all-absorbing. All that day she lay in bed, suffering from cold and nervous prostration, her illness continuing for some days.

Another week wore on. Maud lay in her bed fretting for her absent lover.

"The poor boy must be ill, or else he would write to me, I'm sure. I wish I was

near him to nurse him. Oh! what shall I do?" said she to herself, almost audibly.

At this moment the servant-girl brought her a letter, which was from India. Her heart throbbed with joy at sight of it, and directly the maid withdrew she kissed it and sat up to read it. It ran thus:—

“ESPLANADE ROAD, FORT,  
Bombay 5th January 18——.

DEAR MAUD,

You must have been surprised at not hearing from me for two weeks. I am in an awful plight. I have broached the subject of our engagement to my parents, who are terribly cut up at the news. The idea of a mixed marriage is distasteful to them. What narrow-mindedness! But the prejudice is common to Indians and Anglo-Indians alike. How very unfortunate! Still, I cannot bear to see my parents feel unhappy. I, therefore, implore you to forget and forgive me. It breaks my heart to lose you, but you can well imagine my plight.

Your distracted friend

RUSTIM.”

Scarcely had Maud Osborne finished reading the letter, her mind dazed and tears rolled down her cheeks, her bosom heaving with the tempest of emotion within. Her heart

was crushed. The sun had set for her for ever, and the world become a perfect darkness. It would have been a mercy to have stabbed her to death. The pain caused by it would have been a mere pin-prick compared with the cruel torment of her grief. There is no pain more unbearable than the pain of a broken heart and no sin greater than that of trifling with a woman's love.

At length she sobbed, "Oh, Roos, why should you treat me so? You have sacrificed me for the sake of your parents. Your sense of duty is perverted."

At this juncture, Miss Collins entered the room, and was startled to see Maud's haggard looks and inflamed eyes.

"Haven't you received a letter even by this day's mail?" inquired Miss Collins concernedly. She was the only person in the wide world who was in the confidence of Maud Osborne, and knew of her engagement and the absence of letters from Rustim.

"I have," replied Miss Osborne, whisking off her tears.

"I hope, Mr. Rustim isn't ill," remarked Miss Collins.

"No," replied Miss Osborne.

Miss Collins was puzzled at this answer, but felt certain that some bad news had arrived from Rustim. Therefore, throwing her arm round Miss Osborne's neck, she said, "There is something wrong, Maudie, or else you would not cry your heart out. Do tell me what's the matter?"

Miss Collins was Maud's bosom friend, whose kindly sympathy evoked a fresh outburst of grief, and Maud, in a flood of tears, imparted the news of her misfortune to her friend from whom she had no secrets.

"What a wretch! I could never think he was so bad. It is oriental perfidy," remarked Miss Collins indignantly.

"Don't be hard upon him, dear Ada. We don't know what his troubles may be," sobbed Miss Osborne, who then dropped in a swoon, her delicate frame being unable to bear the strain further.

And Ada shouted for help.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## AN EXILE AT HOME.

RUSTIM's arrival home was a day of great rejoicing, and the pretty villa at Bandra was agog with merriment and joy. There was a banquet at night, and all were in high spirits except Rustim, who was sad and downcast, his parents ascribing his melancholy demeanour to the fatigue of a long voyage.

The pretty villa was as refreshing and imposing as before. It had undergone no change except for a new coat of paint on the wood-work and the walls. The family, however, had changed to some extent. During Rustim's three years' absence from home four of his sisters had married, two having already become mothers and the third expecting soon to become one.

After the banquet was over, Rustim retired to his room at night. The room was his old room, all the knick-knacks and things, of which he had been fond, being in the same position as they were before his departure for England. But they had lost all charm for him. In the seclusion of his room he gave vent to his

feelings, and shed warm tears. They were tears of poignant grief. Oh! you occidental people, you would call it unmanly to shed tears. But you cannot realize what an Indian heart is. It is manly but not callous, and vibrates at the slightest touch of grief or pleasure. Rustim felt like an exile in his own home. His Maud, his dearest Maud, was away—thousands of miles away—from him. The rose which had perfumed his path by its sweet fragrance, and the star which had lighted his course by its merry light was not there. In the midst of his anguish he fell upon his knees, and prayed to God to spread his loving wings wide over the head of his beloved. He was a religious man.

A few days afterwards, Rustim was enrolled as an advocate of the High Court, and engaged chambers in the Esplanade Road on the same floor on which Mr. Bagla Bhagat had his office. Mr. Bagla Bhagat was an old school friend of Rustim, and the friendship formed in boyhood had continued, in spite of their contrariety of dispositions. He was five years older than Rustim, and had come into a large fortune at a very early age on account of his father's death. His education was very limited and his views were narrow, but the ambit of his ambition was great. He was a philistine of philistines and a pharisee of pharisees, and was

determined to force his way up by fair means or foul. Still, he was sincerely devoted to his friend Rustim, in whose welfare he took the keenest interest, and whose confidence he possessed.

About three months wore on since Rustim's arrival in India. Those three months were months of anxiety and trial for him. He soon found out that it was not so very easy to get on at the Bar as he had imagined. His hope to meet his darling within twelve months of their separation seemed to be the optimism of an ardent lover and incapable of realization. "I am afraid many more twelve months will elapse before I meet Maud again," said he very often in despair. But he had a stout heart and unbounded faith in Providence.

Week after week he looked forward to Maud's letters, and received them regularly. They were like an April shower to his drooping spirits, which were revived and vivified by them. For the first time, since his arrival the shower did not come, and there was a drought for Rustim. There was no letter for him from Maud, although the English mails had arrived. He was perplexed and felt miserable. That week was a week of torment for him. At length, the next week a letter arrived from Maud, and Rustim clutched at it from the postman's hand, betraying intense impatience. He read it, and

re-read it, and was satisfied that it was in Maud's hand. It ran thus:—

“OOTY HOUSE, KENSINGTON,  
London, 27th January 18——.

DEAR MR. RUSTIM,

It grieves me to address you thus. Circumstances, however, have so altered that I cannot do otherwise. Our engagement is at an end, and you are free to act as you may wish. Let the past be buried in oblivion, and we must cease to know each other in future. Farewell.

Yours truly,  
MAUD OSBORNE.”

The perusal of this letter startled him. The news came to him with such unexpectancy that he almost felt mad with despair and grief. It was a bomb of misfortune which exploded with terrific crash, shattering his life and pulverising his heart. He lay helpless in an easy chair, his face wearing a deathly pallor.

“You are as glum as glum can be. What's the matter?” remarked Mr. Bagla Bhagat who came into Rustim's chambers as usual.

“Nothing,” replied Rustim.

“People don't look sad for nothing,” remarked Mr. Bagla Bhagat. “I know what distracts you. It is your own fault that you



don't get on. Invite solicitors to dinner, for nothing appeals more to a man than a good dinner. Be sociable with them, instead of sulking and skulking as you do. The prescription is a sovereign one. Two gold mohurs for my advice, if you please," said Mr. Bagla Bhagat facetiously.

"Don't talk nonsense. I have not been thinking of practice," remarked Rustim.

"What the dickens are you thinking of, then?" questioned Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

There was no reply. Mr. Bagla Bhagat was perplexed at the silence, and touched by Rustim's melancholy appearance said, "What's the matter, Rustim? I hope your sweetheart isn't ill."

"No," replied Rustim.

"What is the matter then? Do tell me. If I can be of any use to you, my services are at your command," said Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

"Miss Osborne has broken off the engagement," replied Rustim to his friend, who had known about his engagement and was in his confidence.

"What a shame! But good always comes out of evil. For my part I am not sorry to hear the news. A mixed marriage is like an ill wind which blows no good, and Miss Osborne would have played the devil with you

if you had married her. Consider yourself lucky that the engagement is broken off. English women are not like the women of India. They are not half so good and true," said Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

"Miss Osborne is angelic. I will not allow you to defame her. I will not let you defame English women. They are true, good and affectionate, and will do credit to any country in the world. The most unfortunate thing is that the people of different countries look at one another with jaundiced eyes," remarked Rustim.

"If Miss Osborne is angelic, why has she jilted you? She must have caught a larger fish than you," replied Mr. Bagla Bhagat with a leer in his eyes.

"Miss Osborne wouldn't do any such mean thing. Her letter is enigmatical, and seems to have been written under great pressure from her uncle. She has broken off the engagement for his sake," replied Rustim, who felt hurt at the insinuation made against Miss Osborne.

"Do you think you will write to her asking for an explanation?" inquired Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

"No. How could I, since she has bid me farewell and wishes that we should henceforth be strangers to each other?" replied Rustim.

“Right, Rustim. I knew that you would never demean yourself. Miss Osborne has behaved to you most shabbily,” remarked Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

Rustim was much too overcome with grief to make a further reply. He wept.

Whereupon Mr. Bagla Bhagat mused, “Poor boy, he is terribly cut up. But he will soon get over it. There is no such thing as love. It is the hallucination of a weak intellect or a morbid craving of a feeble heart. I wish Rustim was a little practical. He is in the world but not of the world. What a pity?” So musing, he went into his own room, and returned with a flask of whisky and some soda and ice.

“Take this,” said he to Rustim, pouring out some whisky into a glass. “It will do you good.”

He then poured out some for himself, and winking at Rustim said, “I am a temperance man. Here’s success to temperance and down with drink.”

So saying, he emptied his glass, and Rustim emptied his to drown his feelings.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## A TERRIFIC CRASH.

RUSTIM did not cease to brood over Maud's letter. He felt that Maud ought to have at least informed him of her reason for breaking off the engagement. However, he did not write to her, in deference to her wish. He thought it would only perplex her without doing him any good. In his opinion Maud had treated him most cruelly. But he forgave her. However, he could not forget her. She had carved out an abiding place in his heart. Her image and thoughts of her ever haunted him. He wore on his watch-chain a locket containing her photo and a lock of her hair. He had despaired of seeing her. The future looked dark. Still, he fondly cherished the past and preferred to live upon it.

Thus two years rolled by. Rustim devoted himself to his profession, but he failed to secure a single brief in the High Court. He persevered. His stout heart would not brook a defeat.

One evening he went home from his chambers as usual, and found his father buried in grief. That was a most unusual sight for him

to witness, his father being always cheerful, contented and happy. The poor old man had invested his wealth in mill-shares. The mills, in which he was interested, had sustained heavy losses through the machinations and dishonesty of the agents, who, like parasites, throve upon the blood of the shareholders. There was a crash in the share-market, and hundreds of families were ruined.

“Father, I had told you several times that the mill-shares were not a safe investment, and that with the exception of a very few mills almost all were rotten concerns,” said Rustim to his father.

“Right, my boy. I wish I had listened to you. What shall I do now? I should not have minded the catastrophe so much, if I had been young. But I am old, too old now for business,” replied the father, his eyes dimmed with tears.

That evening was the most unhappy evening the inmates of the villa had ever experienced. They had hitherto known nothing but joy, happiness and comfort. Rustim, in the face of this new trouble, forgot his own, and resolved to be of some help to his father, who had always been to him a very kind and indulgent parent. The trumpet call of duty was sounded for him,

and he lay that night in his bed, planning as to how he should best discharge that duty.

It was about midnight. Sleep had just enmeshed him in its coils, when "Fire, fire," was the shout he heard. He thought it was his imagination. "Fire, fire," he heard again, and opened his eyes. He found smoke issuing from the ground floor, and hurried down. The parlour was in flames. "Fire, fire" and "help, help" were the shouts raised by the unfortunate inmates of the villa. But before any help could be rendered the conflagration had spread to the whole building, the flames hissing and shooting up with maddening fury against the dark canopy of heaven. The spectacle was most weird to look at. Soon was the picturesque villa reduced to ashes. What food for human reflection! Ye, tyrants and autocrats, unjust legislators and unrighteous statesmen, faithless lovers and ungrateful friends, usurious harpies and dishonest tradesmen, sharp practitioners and unholy divines! Has it ever occurred to you that you too will one day be reduced to ashes like that villa at Bandra. Your regal pomp and tortuous state-craft, your perfidy and ingratitude, your hypocrisy and intrigues will not at all avail you in after-life. You, too, are but sojourners in this world like all other mortals. Your stay here may be three-score

years or a little more. Why, then, do you sell your eternal happiness for the sake of temporal power, temporal vanity and temporal pleasure? The sojourn will soon be over—even a hundred years will rapidly pass away, and you will stand in the presence of your Maker to answer for your actions.

As soon as Mr. Bagla Bhagat heard of the fire he hurried to Bandra, and was much affected to learn from Rustim that his father had lost all that he had possessed.

“Misfortunes do not come singly. My father forgot to renew the insurance which expired only yesterday,” said Rustim to Bagla Bhagat.

It is most unfortunate. But you cannot go against *kismet*. What is ordained to happen will happen. However, I should advise you to give up the High Court and practise in the lower Courts,” replied Bagla Bhagat.

“You are right. I have decided to adopt that course,” said Rustim.

“I am glad to hear it. I know it will interfere with your aspirations. But we are creatures of circumstances, and must cut our coat according to our cloth,” replied Bagla Bhagat.

About half an hour afterwards, Bagla Bhagat left, after ascertaining from Rustim

that he would be in his chambers on that day at 11 o'clock as usual.

"I should very much like to help Rustim, but I am sure he won't have it. He is proud and fastidious. But Bagla Bhagat will have his way. See if I don't succeed," mused Bagla Bhagat as soon as he left the smouldering embers of the villa.

On the stroke of eleven Rustim arrived in his chambers. He was surprised to see an outlandish-looking man seated there. Seeing Rustim he stood up and respectfully salaamed him.

"What do you want, gentleman?" inquired Rustim.

"There is a defamation case against me in the Sessions Court of Dharwar, and I want you to defend me," replied the visitor.

"Have you got a copy of the proceedings in the Magistrate's Court?" inquired Rustim.

"No. The copy is not ready. The date is not yet fixed for hearing. I wish to retain you. What may be your fee?" asked the client.

"Two hundred rupees a day" returned Rustim.

"It is too high, sir. I cannot afford to pay you by the day. The case is a long one, and there will be a number of hearings. I'll



pay you two thousand rupees for the whole case. Do accept these terms, please. I am a poor but respectable man, and will pay you cash at once," said the client pleadingly.

Rustim accepted the two thousand rupees as his fee, and the client withdrew, saying that he would return with the papers as soon as the date was fixed for the case.

Rustim thanked God for His mercy. That was the first fee he had earned since his enrolment. In the evening he handed over the whole amount to his father in their new but humbler residence at Bandra. The old man was pleased and invoked God's blessings on his son.

A fortnight elapsed. Still, the client did not turn up as promised. Rustim fidgetted and spoke to Mr. Bagla Bhagat about it.

"Don't fret, Rustim. The client has not come back, because he must have settled the case," replied Mr. Bagla Bhagat.

Rustim, however, never saw or heard from that client again.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## A MARRIAGE WITHOUT LOVE.

“**B**AMUNDARU, the match-broker, has some eligible young men in mind for our daughters. It is high time that both Soona and Jai were married,” said Rustim’s mother to her spouse.

“I wish they were,” returned Rustim’s father.

“We have four young men to select from. One is a solicitor, another a doctor, a third in Government service, and a fourth a head clerk in a merchant’s office. Their prices vary according to their merits. The solicitor expects a dowry of Rs. 10,000, the doctor Rs. 7,000, the Government servant Rs. 5,000, and the merchant’s clerk Rs. 4,000. A little reduction is possible.”

“I cannot afford to pay these prices. I wish I had money. What a vice has crept into our community? It is a shame that young men should offer themselves for sale in the matrimonial market, and knock themselves down to the highest bidder. They are marital beggars and educated mendicants.”

"If we wish to see our daughters well settled in life, we must pay stiff prices for it."

"I have no money left. What am I to do?"

"I know that. But I've a scheme in view. There is Jingling Adi's only daughter in the market. Russy can have her for the asking, and get twenty thousand rupees as dowry. He can pay us that money to marry our daughters," said Rustim's mother.

"Ratti, you shock me. Do you think Russy is mean or mercenary? He is a very good boy, and has been toiling hard for our sake. I would not ask him to do wrong for anything."

"Oh! what shall I do then? We are now old and poor. What will become of my Soona and Jai, poor girls? They are well brought up, have good looks, and are kind-hearted. But money is everything. Young men marry money, not wives nowadays," said Rustim's mother whimperingly.

Rustim was in the next room, which was divided by a low wooden partition, and overheard the conversation. His heart ached, and he was moved by his mother's sobbings.

"Maud is lost to me for ever. I had better marry Jingling Adi's daughter, and thus please mother. What an irony of fate! I,

who had hated mercenary alliances, to contract one myself. But Soona and Jai must be married anyhow," mused Rustim to himself.

Within two months of this musing, Rustim was married to Mr. Adi's only daughter, Silloo. Silloo was an attractive and an accomplished girl, and Rustim was considered a fortunate young man in marrying her.

"You have made a good bargain, Rustim. You have married both money and beauty. Money without beauty is tolerable; beauty without money is not; and lucky is he who gets both. It is a Parthian shot," said Mr. Bagla Bhagat, congratulating his friend upon his choice.

On the wedding-night Rustim had a dream. But he did not dream of the wife who lay beside him, but of Maud who looked scornfully at her as an usurper, and, shedding tears, said, "O! Roos, you have broken my heart. You should not have married this woman."

At this moment Rustim wept aloud, and his wife was startled out of her sleep.

"Why do you cry, dear?" asked Mrs. Rustim affectionately, wiping off the tears which were rolling down her husband's cheeks.

"It is a nightmare, I suppose. The dinner has not agreed with me. A wedding-dinner never

does," replied Rustim, ashamed of the fib he was telling.

"Eau-de-cologne is a good remedy for a nightmare. Let me apply some to you." So saying, poor Silloo sat up and rubbed some of it on her husband's chest and stomach. What an experience on a wedding-night?

A few weeks elapsed. Rustim saw Maud in his dream once more. This time she was seen gasping spasms of death, her eyes intently fixed on Rustim. Rustim shook with fear, and cried out, "Maud, dear Maud!"

At hearing this exclamation his wife awoke and inquired of Rustim who that lady was.

"She is the heroine in the novel I was reading to-night. 'Maud, dear Maud.' It was how she was apostrophized by her absent lover, and the words stuck into my head," replied Rustim.

"My dear, you must not read sensational novels. You need rest," said Mrs. Rustim kissing her husband on the forehead.

A few more weeks elapsed. And Rustim was one day kissing Maud's photo in the locket which he had taken off his chain since his marriage, but which he had concealed in the folds of an overcoat which he used to wear in England. His wife noticed this, and Rustim changed colour like a criminal when surprised.

“Who is that Englishwoman? That is your Maud, I suppose, the heroine of your novel. I see now what nightmare it was which had caused you to weep on our wedding-night. Why did you marry me if you did not love me? I suppose you wanted my money,” said Mrs. Rustim reproachfully.

Poor Rustim stood penitent, his eyes fixed on the ground.

“Nice goings-on for a married man,” continued his wife. “You men are faithless. Who is that pretty barmaid, may I know?”

“She is not a barmaid. It is the photograph of a highly respectable woman,” replied Rustim, feeling much hurt at the aspersion cast upon Miss Osborne.

“Fiddlesticks. I am not as green as you seem to imagine. A respectable woman would never intrigue like this,” said Mrs. Rustim.

“What are you talking, my dear? I cannot bear to hear you speak ill of that lady. She is as good and true a woman as you are,” replied Rustim.

“I should not like to be compared with a barmaid. You are adding insult to injury.” So saying, Mrs. Rustim began to weep.

“I assure you, Silloo, I have not insulted you at all,” said Rustim, taking her in his arms and kissing her. “Miss Osborne—for that is



"Nice goings-on for a married man," continued his wife.

"You men are faithless. Who is that  
pretty barmaid, may I know?"

[See p. 222.]

the name of the lady—belongs to a respectable English family. I was engaged to her. That engagement she broke off after I returned to India. For over two years and a half I have not heard anything from her, and I do not know where she is, or what has become of her.”

“ You have preserved her photo and her lock of hair. You still love her,” sobbed Mrs. Rustim.

“ Forgive me, dear Silloo, for having hurt your feelings. I will try to be a good husband to you, and your happiness will always have a premier place in my heart,” said Rustim to his wife, kissing her again.

The husband and wife had patched up their squabble, but a gulf was created between them. Silloo saw that her husband was kind, indulgent and attentive to her, but that she did not possess his love. Her heart ached, and she gradually languished. No woman can bear a rival. There cannot be two swords in one scabbard. A true woman lives for love and dies for love. It is the manna of her existence. Poor Silloo gradually pined away, but did not breathe the cause of her sufferings to a single soul. To the world she proclaimed her married life to be perfect, and her husband loving, affectionate and kind, but her heart withered, and within twelve months of her marriage she passed away.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## A MONK WITHOUT A COWL.

MISS OSBORNE, after she had despatched the letter to Rustim releasing him from his promise, became very ill. She recovered, but her strength was gone, and she was reduced to a skeleton. She renounced pleasures and gaieties, and secluded herself in the cloister of her home at Kensington. She was a monk without a cowl and a recluse without compulsion.

One day her uncle, moved by her gaunt appearance, said to her: "I am sorry for you, Maud, that that wretch has broken your heart. I never thought he was so bad."

Maud started up at hearing these words, for her secret was known to no other than Miss Collins. However, she could not bear Rustim being spoken of harshly, and replied, amidst tears, "Uncle, don't please. You do not know his troubles." So saying, she flitted out of his presence and mused, "How has uncle come to know of it? Did Ada tell him? Oh! dear, I cannot bear humiliation."

"That girl is madly fond of him. Ah! Volatile, I shall never forgive you," said Sir

Augustus to himself, pointing his finger in the direction of the receding figure of Miss Osborne.

He, however, never afterwards referred to Mr. Volatile Gaspot in the presence of his niece for fear of hurting her feelings, but he was very much enraged at him, and did not cease to think of the wrong he had inflicted on his niece.

Time wore on. One day when Sir Augustus was descending the staircase of his house, absorbed in the thought of Maud's unhappiness, his foot slipped and he fell. He was badly hurt, and the doctor pronounced his case serious.

"Volatile is a scoundrel. Forget him, child," said he to Maud, holding her arm in his feeble hand. Before Maud could reply, he breathed his last.

Her uncle's death was a great blow to Maud Osborne. The cup of her unhappiness was full to overflowing. She had lost her parents when she was a child, and Sir Augustus had been both father and mother to her ever since. A kindlier, truer and a more generous-hearted man never lived. He bequeathed his whole fortune of about sixty thousand pounds to Maud, who would have most cheerfully foregone the whole of it, if her uncle could have been spared to her a little while longer.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## A POLICE INVESTIGATION.

“**B**HOLA NATH and his friends thrashed me last night, and broke my head. Ram,\* Ram, Ram, I cannot bear the pain,” said Tampal Singh, his head bandaged, to Badmash Rao, the Chief Constable of Poorgunj, who was seated in his office.

“There was a drunken brawl, I suppose. How much did you drink last night, Tampal Singh?” inquired the Chief Constable.

“Only a thimbleful. Ram, Ram, Ram,\* I cannot bear this pain. I am dying.”

“Say you drank a bottle. Your eyes are so red and swollen. Don’t I know you? Get away, you toper.”

“Fouzdar Saheb,† I swear by the holy cow that I had only a wee drop of *bewda*.‡ Bhola Nath has made mince-meat of me. Ram, Ram, Ram, I cannot bear the pain. I am dying.”

“Don’t tell lies. Bhola Nath is a good man. He would do no such thing. Begone.”

“Fouzdar Saheb, I want you to help me.”

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\* God      † A Chief Constable.      ‡ COUNTRY, 1 quor.

“You go to a magistrate, if you think you are hurt. There is no case for me to interfere.”

“I will not forget your services, Fouzdar Saheb. I will sell my life to repay your obligation.”

So saying, Tampal Singh slapped his pocket significantly, and raised his five fingers to denote that he would pay him Rupees 50.

“Tut, tut. Nothing less than thrice that amount will serve the purpose. The matter is a very serious one.”

“Split the difference. Let it be Rs. 100.”

So saying, he slipped into the Fouzdar's hand two notes of Rs. 20 each, and promised to pay the balance in the evening.

“We must make out a case of rioting. The offence of causing simple hurt is not cognizable by the Police.”

“Very good idea, Fouzdar Saheb. The graver the charge, the better. Bhola Nath should be sent to *kala pani*.\*

“How many persons assaulted you?”

“Four.”

“There must be at least five persons to constitute the offence of rioting. It is a serious hitch in our way.”

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\* Transportation.

“Khatpati is a thorn in our side. Why not implicate him?” interposed Lucha Khan, the Jamadar and right-hand man of Mr. Badmash Rao.

“Capital idea. We shall kill two birds with one shot,” replied the Fouzdar.

“Jamadar Saheb, I feel obliged to you,” said Tampal Singh.

“Empty thanks don’t fill one’s stomach. You must *khushkaraot*† him. The more the molasses the sweeter will be the thing, don’t you know,” said the Fouzdar.

“I will pay Lucha Khan Rs. 15.”

“That is too little. Pay him Rs. 25. Your work will then be done in a first-rate manner.”

“Agreed. But Bhola Nath must be sent to *kala pani*.”

“Rioting is a bailable offence. There must be a knife or some other weapon introduced to make it non-bailable,” interposed Lucha Khan.

“I forgot to tell you, Fouzdar Saheb, that Bhola Nath attempted to cut my throat with a knife. Pangla interfered, or else I should have been killed,” said Tampal Singh.

“Have you got witnesses to prove all this?” inquired the Fouzdar.

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† Please.

"Yes, Pangla, Tangla and Dangla. They will depose to anything and everything you may like."

"Very good. Your complaint must be reduced to writing."

"Karkun,"<sup>‡</sup> cried the Fouzdar that very instant to his clerk, who came scratching and belching from the next room.

"Take down Tampal Singh's complaint."

The Karkun hiccuped in answer and withdrew, followed by Tampal Singh.

"Smoke a *bid̄di*," said the Karkun, handing a *bid̄di* to him after both had squatted on a *gadi*\* on the floor in the Karkun's room.

Tampal Singh lighted the *bid̄di* and whiffed. The Karkun lighted another and whiffed.

"I will write out an excellent complaint for you. Don't forget my *pan-sopari*,<sup>†</sup>" said the Karkun.

"Very well."

"Were you beaten on the road or in your house? The latter makes the offence more serious."

"In my house. I forgot to tell the Fouzdar about it."

"Very well."

<sup>‡</sup> A clerk.

\* A cushion.

<sup>†</sup> Tip.

At length, between the smoking of the *biddi*, the chewing of *pan-sopari*,\* spitting, scratching and belching, the complaint was written out, and the Karkun was rewarded with a rupee by Tampal Singh.

"Hurry up," said the Fouzdar after running his eye through the complaint. "There are only ten minutes for the train, Tampal Singh."

Badmash Rao, the custodian of the public peace and safety of the people of Poorgunj, Lucha Khan, his lieutenant, Tampal Singh, the complainant, and a party of police constables then sallied forth to the railway station to catch the train for Tintara, where the offence was alleged to have been committed. The village of Tintara, the home of Tampal Singh, was five miles from the station of that name, which, in its turn, was eight miles from the railway station of Poorgunj.

In due time the party arrived at Tintara, and Bhola Nath and four others were arrested by the Police.

"There must be a *panchnama*." Who shall be the *Panch*?" inquired Lucha Khan of his superior officer in a whisper.

"Send for Kassam Kangal, Odhev Katchra and Antone Thooskey. They are our men. No fear of their splitting," said the Fouzdar.

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\* Betel-nut and leaves.

“Where is the Police Patel?” †

“Tampal Singh has gone to fetch him. He treated him with liquor yesterday, and paid him five rupees this morning.”

Within half-an-hour the *Panch* and the Police Patel of Tintara arrived, and an inquiry was held in their presence.

“There are some tiles broken. How is that?” inquired the Fouzdar of Tampal Singh, suggestively pointing his finger to the roof of his house.

“Bhola Nath threw stones on the roof and broke the tiles.”

A few broken tiles were then brought down from the roof, and the *Panch* was satisfied that they had been recently broken.

“Look at the door, Fouzdar Saheb,” said Tampal Singh, pointing to the door of his ramshackle house. “Bhola Nath wrenched off the chain.”

“Don’t tell lies. The chain was wrenched off by you a month ago while drunk,” ejaculated Khatpati.

“Hold your tongue,” said Lucha Khan, poking a stick into Khatpati’s side.

The *Panch* looked at the door, and was satisfied that the chain had been wrenched off only the previous night.

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† A village officer.



The Police and the *Panch* then proceeded to Bhola Nath's house.

"Produce your knife," said the Fouzdar to Bhola Nath, standing in the doorway of his house. Bhola Nath did so.

"This is the knife, Fouzdar Saheb, which Bhola Nath aimed at my throat last night."

The Police seized the knife, and the *Panch* was satisfied that Bhola Nath had produced it voluntarily as the weapon with which he had attempted to kill Tampal Singh.

"Khatpati must be searched," suggested Lucha Khan.

This was done, and a clasp-knife was found on his person.

"I always carry that knife with me," said Khatpati.

"Keep quiet, you pig," remarked Lucha Khan, poking him with the stick again.

The clasp-knife was seized, and the *Panch* was satisfied that Khatpati had concealed it on his person to avoid detection.

The houses of the other accused persons were searched, and sticks were found.

"These are the sticks with which I was beaten," said Tampal Singh.

And the sticks were seized, and the *Panch* was satisfied that Tampal Singh had been belaboured with them.

"This is a false complaint. Tampal Singh is my enemy," remarked Bhola Nath distractedly.

"Therefore you broke his door and hammered him. People cannot be allowed to take the law into their own hands," returned the Fouzdar.

"We are innocent, Fouzdar Saheb," remarked two others. "Tampal Singh is a drunkard and a liar," snarled Khatpati.

"Keep quiet," said Lucha Khan raising his stick to strike him.

"I will kill you, and get hanged," said Khatpati, rushing at Lucha Khan's throat to throttle him, but he was seized by a policeman before he could do anything.

"He must be separately charged for attempting to murder a public servant and otherwise obstructing him in the discharge of his duty," said the Fouzdar.

"I don't care. Charge me with a hundred offences. I cannot bear this *zulam*," replied Khatpati despairingly.

The *panchnama* was then made out, and the incriminating articles were handed over to the Police Patel for safe custody. Bhola Nath and four others were handcuffed and marched off to the railway station by the party of police constables, the Fouzdar and Jamadar follow-

ing in a bullock-cart after obtaining from Tampal Singh the balance of the tip.

“I have spent money, but I have been sufficiently avenged. Bhola Nath will feel disgraced at being seen handcuffed in public,” reflected Tampal Singh gleefully.

“Bhola Nath and his co-accused were locked up in the Police Chowkey at Poorgunj. It was a small room, in which there were already cooped half-a-dozen under-trial prisoners accused of stealing cocoanuts. The heat was overpowering, and the smell emanating from those half-a-dozen wretches was nauseating. It was a Saturday evening, and poor Bhola Nath and his co-accused were obliged to remain in that dungeon till Monday.

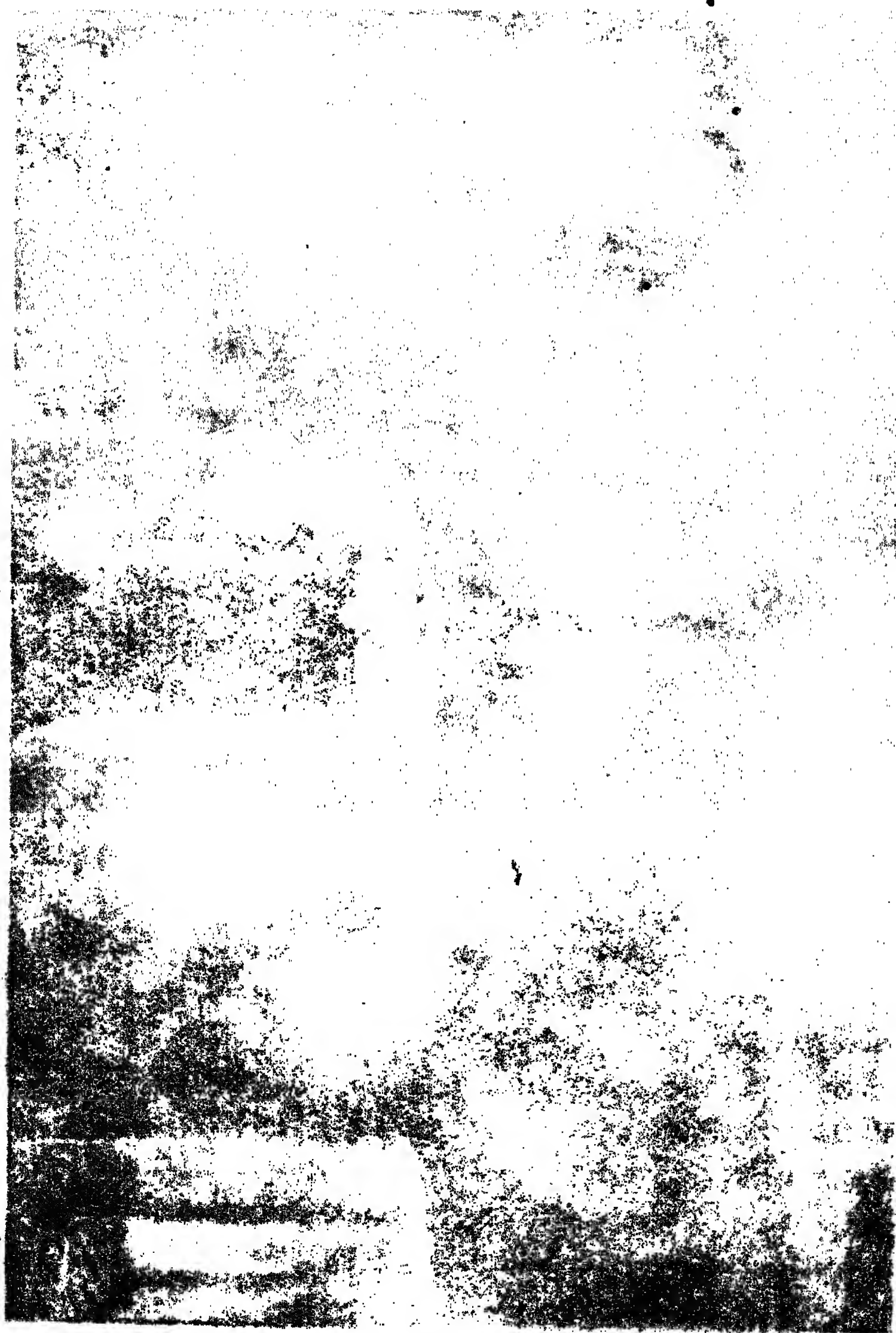
“We shall die in this hole,” remarked Khatpati.

“No fear of that. It is plague-proof, and its odoriferous smell is more efficacious than Haffkine’s serum,” said Lucha Khan grimacingly.



The Court of Mr. Magnus Myope, I.C.S., Assistant Collector and  
Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Poorgunj.

[See p. 235.]



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE COURT OF MR. MAGNUS MYOPE.

It was the year 18——. The bubonic plague was raging in virulence in Bombay. The people died by thousands, and all sorts of causes and remedies were assigned by the doctors, who, as usual, did not agree. The plague was ascribed to bad drainage, bad ventilation, rotten grain, fleas, rats and in short to anything and everything. The Government was in a plight, and instituted the Plague Department with the object of arresting and extirpating the epidemic. But the object was defeated, and the Plague Department intensified the public misery, instead of allaying it, by its several objectionable methods and measures. It sprang a big hole in the coffers of the Municipal Corporation of Bombay, which supplied it with lacs of rupees under pressure from Government. There was no efficient check on the Department, and consequently there was a sinful waste of the rate-payers' money.

During this period Rustim received a telegram from Poorgunj to appear in Bhola Nath's Case. He proceeded thither in response



to it. At the junction station of Muddlepore there was inspection of passengers by the Plague Authorities, and Rustim was asked by one of them to alight from the first-class carriage in which he was.

“You cannot proceed further. You will have to stay in quarantine. Come out, please,” said a plague official to Rustim.

“Why do you ask me and not the other gentlemen?” asked Rustim, pointing to his fellow-passengers.

“They are Europeans, sir.”

“What difference is there between me and the Europeans except the colour of my skin? I am as neat, tidy and good as any of them.”

“That is true. But we must carry out the rules.”

So saying, the plague official handed up the plague rules to Rustim, who on reading them alighted at once, for he was a great respecter of the law.

At this incident a European's cook, who was standing on the platform, grinned, and being elated by the whisky he had drunk from his master's bottle on the sly, said: “I, Pedru Fernand alias ‘Curry Chawal,’ a Saheb's cook, am a more respectable, cleaner and tidier person in the eye of the law than a native

barrister or a judge, for under the plague rules I cannot be quarantined when I accompany my Saheb. Hurrah !”

“Pedru, you are drunk,” said his master to him.

“Horrid pain in stomach, sir. Took little *bewda*, sir,” replied Pedru, who was unkempt and bedraggled.

Rustim was shown into a dirty little shed devoid of any furniture.

“How do you expect me to spend hours in this pig-sty ? It will make me ill,” said Rustim to the plague official, who only shrugged his shoulders in reply.

There was not a chair for Rustim to sit on, nor could he get any food for love or money. He had a bitter experience of the plague regulations.

Somehow or other, however, he managed to reach Poorgunj. Mr. Magnus Myope, I. C. S., Assistant Collector and Sub-Divisional Magistrate, held his Court in a room of his bungalow. Here he dispensed justice and did his revenue-work. Rustim attended the Court at 11 o'clock, that being the hour fixed for its opening. But he was obliged to sit on the verandah, as Mr. Magnus Myope was of opinion that the Court-room was his private room and that nobody had a right to enter it without his



permission. The parties and witnesses in the case sat or stood in the compound under the shade of a tree, they being prohibited from occupying the verandah.

Rustim sat and sat, the witnesses broiled and broiled, and Mr. Hooshiar Punt, pleader for the prosecution, alternately dozed, chatted and chewed *pan-sopari* in the clerks' room. It was a most wearisome waiting for all of them. At length, at half-past four the case was called out, and Rustim was ushered into the presence of the great Mr. Myope, who was seated at his desk in shirt-sleeves and smoking. Near him was seated on a carpet on the floor his *Shirestedar*, Potobá, with his legs crossed, his thigh serving as a writing-desk for him. The trial began, Mr. Hooshiar Punt appearing for the prosecution, and Rustim for the accused.

The complainant's name was then called out by Potobá, the clerk. He appeared in answer to it, but inadvertently forgot to take off his shoes while entering the room.

"Pattawalla,\* turn that man out and throw away his shoes," said the Magistrate to that dignitary, pointing his finger to the complainant.

The pattawalla carried out the order.

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\* A peon or a messenger with a badge or belt.

"Pattawalla," shouted the Magistrate again.

"Sahab" was the reply.

"Bring that man here."

"Achha Sahab."\* And the pattawalla dragged in the complainant.

"You are a badmash.† You have wilfully insulted the Court. I must send you to gaol," said the Magistrate to the complainant, who thereupon apologized, trembling with fear.

"Don't do it again. I let you go this time." So saying, the Magistrate affirmed the complainant, puffing at his cigar.

"Your Worship will allow me to examine a witness first," interposed Mr. Hooshier Punt.

"I cannot let you do that. It is a novel procedure.

"I am entirely at the mercy of the Court, your Honour," said Mr. Hooshier Punt. It produced very great effect upon his Worship.

"Well, I will this time let you examine the witness first; but it is not to be treated as a precedent, mind."

"Thank your Worship very much," returned the Pleader.

The witness was then called and affirmed, the Magistrate recording evidence in English and Potobá in the Vernacular.

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\* Very well, Sir.      † A scoundrel.

"What is your name?" asked Mr. Hooshiar Punt of the witness.

"Topekhan."

"Your father's name?"

"Tismarkhan."

"Are you related to the Khans of Khelat?" interposed the Magistrate, entertaining a suspicion that the termination 'Khan' showed kinship with the Khans of Khelat.

"No, sir. But my great-great-grandfather and Tippu Sultan were cousins," replied Topekhan to the great admiration of Badmash Rao, who knew that the witness' ancestors were humble oilmen of Poorgunj.

"Were you present when the accused were arrested by the Police?" asked Mr. Hooshiar Punt.

"I was."

"Did they say anything at that time?"

"Yes. They said that they entered the complainant's house at night with a view to kill him, but—"

"I object to this evidence," interposed Rustim.

"I don't see how you can. The witness is a respectable man," observed the Magistrate.

"The evidence is inadmissible in law, sir."

"Law is for the High Court. I go upon common sense."

"Law is but crystallized common sense, your Worship."

"That is not the point for consideration now. You are irrelevant. I hold that the evidence is admissible."

"Will your Worship make a note of my objection?"

"No. I am not bound to do it."

"Khaw, khaw, khaw," coughed the witness at this juncture.

"How dare you? It is clear contempt of Court. I must at once try you for that offence. What do you say?" said the Magistrate irascibly.

"I am suffering from cough, sir. I did not mean to insult the Court, sir. I beg your pardon, sir," returned Topekhan.

"Your explanation is unsatisfactory. Do you plead guilty to the charge?"

"There were three 'khaw khaws,' your Honour," respectfully suggested Potoba, the clerk, "and therefore there were three distinct offences of the same kind, your Honour, committed within the space of twelve months, your Honour, which can be tried at one trial, your Honour, under section 234 of the Criminal Procedure Code, your Honour."

"Dear me! I forgot all about that. Let there be three charges then."

And Topekhan pleaded guilty to them all.

"As this is your first offence I warn and discharge you. Go away," said the Magistrate in deciding the case. And Topekhan skulked out of the room.

"I wish to put a few questions to the witness, if your Honour will allow me," said Mr. Hooshiar Punt.

"Surely not, after his misbehaviour in Court."

"As your Honour pleases. May I call the next witness?"

"No. It is time for me to rise now," said the Magistrate looking at his watch.

"I would ask your Worship to release my clients on bail," said Rustim. "They are respectable men and the case—"

"I think this is a fit case for bail," interrupted the Magistrate.

"The offence of rioting is on the increase at Poorgunj, your Honour, and the accused are the Jack Cades in embryo of that place," put in Mr. Badmash Rao, the Chief Constable.

Rustim protested against this remark, characterizing it as scandalous and untrue, and made wilfully with the object of prejudicing the mind of the Court. He added that the Chief Constable had no right to address the Court, being the investigating police officer in the case.

"I can hear him as Assistant Collector, if not as Magistrate," observed his Worship.

"Your Worship is holding a judicial trial."

"What difference does that make? I am the same individual after all, and cannot unlearn as Magistrate what I may learn as Assistant Collector. I refuse your application for bail, and adjourn the case till this day week. My camp will be at Junglepore on that day."

"Junglepore is a most inconvenient place. Would your Worship fix some other place?" interposed Rustim.

"No," said the Magistrate, holding the cigar between his teeth.

The Court then rose, and the accused were marched off to the police station, handcuffed, in the custody of two armed policemen, Bholanath shedding tears of anguish, and his co-accused looking dejected and despondent. These unfortunate victims of the perfidy of the Police had already walked two miles in manacles in the hot sun of the forenoon on their way from the lock-up to Mr. Myope's bungalow, and were being taken now to be cooped again in the hot and stifling atmosphere of that Black Hole at Poorgunj.

A week wore on. Rustim would not go to Junglepore unless his fee was doubled. That was done, and he proceeded to that place by

the same train by which Bholanath and his co-accused were taken thither from Poorgunj handcuffed. Junglepore was eight miles from the railway station of Bhikhári-gaum, and Bholanath and his co-accused, on alighting from the train, after two hours' journey, were obliged to tramp the whole way in the scorching heat of the midday sun.

Mr. Myope's tents were pitched under the refreshing shelter of a cluster of trees away from the village, which consisted of a few huts and cabins cramped within a narrow area and redolent with the smell of abject poverty. Thither drove Rustim in a wheezy, rickety-rackety tonga, but was vexed to learn that the case would not be heard on that day, Mr. Myope having been transferred only the day previous as Acting Collector and District Magistrate of Chutneypor. Rustim was vexed on account of the expenses and hardship which his clients were obliged to bear. He drove back to the station, and his clients tramped back to it in custody of the Police, but there was no train for them till the next morning. This was Rustim's first experience of an itinerary Court, and as he lay down at night on the hard bench at the station with his brief-bag as his pillow, he, sweet-tempered as he was, anathematized the administration of justice, and wished Mr. Myope and his Court were drowned.





The Court of Mr. Bhampal Rao, First Class Magistrate  
and Huzur Deputy Collector of Poorgunj.

[[See p. 245.]]





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## A LEGAL LUMINARY.

ON the departure of Mr. Myope, the case was transferred to the Court of Mr. Bhampal Rao, First Class Magistrate and Huzur Deputy Collector of Poorgunj. Tampal Singh, the complainant, was delighted at the news of the transfer, for had he not tipped Mr. Bhampal Rao when he was only a clerk in the Collector's office? There floated before his mind the prospect of approaching that judicial functionary, who, erstwhile, to his knowledge, had a predilection for perquisites.

The trial was resumed from where it had been left off by Mr. Myope. The complainant was examined by Mr. Hooshier Punt. He deposed that the five accused broke his door, entered his house and belaboured him with sticks, and that Bhola Nath, the first accused, also attempted to cut his throat with a knife. At this stage he groaned, "Ram, Ram, Ram, I cannot bear the pain, I am dying." Whereupon, the Magistrate remarked, "Poor man is dying with pain."

"He is shamming," said Rustim.

"Did not your clients bate him at all?" asked the Magistrate.

"No, sir," returned Rustim.

"Who bate him then? Did Angel Gabriel bate him or vát?"

"I am sorry your Worship is prejudging the case."

"No, no, no, I am simply telling you, Mr. Rustim, becáse I know vát human nature is. There cannot be smoke without fire. That is vát I álvays say. Don't I, Mr. Hooshiar Punt?"

"Yes, sir. Your Worship has vast experience of human nature," replied that gentleman.

"Vell, that was vát the Commissioner Sáheb once told me. He said: Mr. Bhampal Rao, vát would Government do without you? You are an efficient officer."

"I wish to put a question to the complainant, your Honour," said Mr. Hooshiar Punt.

"A'lright," said the Magistrate, folding a couple of betel-leaves, which he had just taken out of his *pan-sopari* bag.

"Did the accused No. 1 say anything to your wife in your absence?" asked Mr. Hooshiar Punt of the complainant.

"I object to this question. It would be hearsay evidence," said Rustim.

"The evidence is admissible. I appeal to your Worship's vast and varied experience," remarked Mr. Hooshiar Punt.

His Worship was perplexed, not knowing which of the two rival contentions was correct. He, however, got over the difficulty by saying, "I disallow the question; but under section 165 of the Evidence Act the Court has the power to put any question at any stage it likes. So I will put the question myself." The question was then put by the Court and answered by the witness.

Rustim then began cross-examination, in the course of which he asked the witness if he had mortgaged his house in Bombay to the accused No. 1. Here Badmash Rao shook his head to tell the witness to answer 'No.'

"It is highly improper for the Chief Constable to shake his head to the witness," said Rustim.

"It is untrue, sir, I did not shake my head, sir," returned Badmash Rao.

"Yes, you did," said Rustim.

"Please, gentlemen, do not quarrel so. Both of you are right. But I hold that Mr. Badmash Rao should not make signs to the witness in future, and that Counsel should not make any remarks against Mr. Badmash Rao," said the Magistrate.

"Where is the deed of mártgage?" interrupted Mr. Badmash Rao.

"Where is the deed of mártgage?" echoed the Magistrate.

"There is no deed of mortgage, sir," replied Rustim.

"There cannot be a mártgage without a writing. This is a clear attempt to defraud the stamp-revenue. I must bring it to the notice of the Collector," said the Magistrate, chewing *pan-sopari*.

"I believe the mortgage is not a legal mortgage," put in Mr. Hooshier Punt.

"Is that so, Mr. Rustim?" asked the Magistrate of him going to the window to spit out the betelnut juice.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Then I will make a note that Counsel for the accused admits that the mártgage is illegal," said the Magistrate.

"I did not say that the mortgage was illegal," returned Rustim.

"Vát, Vát! Is there a difference between a mártgage that is not legal and an illegal mártgage? I will ask you, Mr. Rustim, vát difference is there between a father's wife and a mother?" At this sally Mr. Badmash Rao and others laughed, and the Magistrate was tickled and joined in the laugh.

"The mortgage is an equitable mortgage, sir," said Rustim.

"Vát, vát! That is a new law to me altogether. I have heard of justice and icvity, but I have not heard of an icvitable mártgage. Vát is your áthárity?"

The authority was shown. Still, the Magistrate had his doubt and reserved the point for further consideration.

Some more witnesses for the prosecution were then examined, and Mr. Hooshiar Punt closed his case. The Magistrate framed a charge against the accused, who pleaded not guilty. Rustim called witnesses for the defence, who deposed that the complainant had sustained injuries by a fall while coming out of a liquor-shop at Tintara in an inebriated condition. The Counsel for the accused then addressed the Court, and the complainant's Pleader replied.

Some days after the Magistrate delivered his judgment, which was *verbatim* as follows:—  
 "The case for the prásecution has got stráng legs, which counsel for the accused could not shake, in spite of his searching cráss-examination. The Court sees no reason to disbelieve the complainant and his witnesses, since the defence has failed to show why they should have spoken untruth. The assált must have been very very stráng, otherwise the

complainant would not have ventured to groan in Court that he was dying with pain. The Court finds that the case for the defence is legless and cannot stand for one moment, in spite of the artificial leg of an inevitable marriage, with which Counsel for the defence attempted to prop it up, but which he admitted was not legal, and, therefore, the Court holds that it is illegal and inadmissible in evidence, especially in a Criminal Court. The two witnesses called for the defence completely broke down in cross-examination. One of them said that the complainant had fallen two paces away from the steps of the liquor-shop at Tintara, whereas the other witness said that the complainant had fallen about five paces from the steps. Then again, the first witness said that the complainant was lifted up by him with two hands, and the other witness swore that only one hand had been used and not two. Further, the first witness said that the complainant's cap had come out of his head while he was lying on the ground. On the other hand, the other witness said that it had not come out of his head. In the face of these material discrepancies, which go to the root of the case, the Court cannot swallow the evidence of the defence witnesses, who have clearly perjured themselves, and the Court accords



sanction for their prosecution. The Court further finds that the accused persons would have evaded the sharp claws of justice, but for the zeal and ability of Mr. Badmash Rao, the Chief Constable. The offence of rioting, says the Chief Constable, is increasing in Poorgunj, and the accused are the Jack Cades in embryo of that place. Although it is his bare word only, the Court sees no reason why he should be disbelieved. In any case, in the interest of justice, the Court feels itself called upon to take judicial notice of that fact.

Under the circumstances, I find the accused guilty of the charges of rioting, house-breaking, mischief, &c., and sentence them to twelve months' rigorous imprisonment and to pay a fine of Rupees 100 each; in default, they must jointly and severally undergo a further term of four months' imprisonment."



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## INDIA'S LOYALTY.

THE great Queen died, and all India went into mourning. So very deep and abiding were the love, veneration and devotion of the people of India for their departed monarch that it is no hyperbole to say that they felt as if they had lost one of their own dearest and nearest of kin. To them their Sovereign's death was a great national calamity and an irreparable loss. What wonder was there then, that the heterogeneous races of India, with their diversities of faiths, countless strata of castes, varieties of languages and differences of complexions, should have displayed a singular unanimity in the expression of their sorrow and a unique accord in sentiments of most loyal and respectful reverence? The followers of Islam united their voices with the worshippers of a hundred gods, and Christians, Parsis, Buddhists and Jews vied with each other in offering in common their prayers for the beatitude of their departed Monarch. On the funeral day, there was a complete cessation of business, toil and labour, and the whole country from end to end was enshrouded, as it were, in sepulchral silence, reminding

one of enchanted regions in fairy tales, in which men are petrified and animate beings are turned into mute lifeless objects. Jagirdars and ryots, merchants and tradesmen, lawyers and litigants, pedlars and haberdashers, artisans and labourers, stage-players and harlequins, publicans and coffee-house keepers,—in short all mankind in India rested on their oars for that day of grief. It was an occasion of unparalleled mourning in the history of the country; and the universal expression of sorrow was due to no viceregal mandate or a pro-consul's edict directing the observance of it. It was the spontaneous burst of feeling on the part of a whole nation, which was overwhelmed with grief at the demise of a great, good, benevolent, and generous-hearted Ruler.

In the usual course H. R. H. the Prince of Wales ascended the Throne, and the people of India received the news with acclamation, for King Edward was a worthy son of a worthy mother, and had inherited from her along with the Crown those excellent qualities of mind and heart, which had endeared her to her millions of subjects and rendered her name imperishable in the history of the world. In order to commemorate his accession, it was decided to hold a Durbar at Delhi on the 1st day of January 1903.

A few days before the Durbar Day, Bagla Bhagat went into Rustim's chambers to invite him to Delhi as his guest. He was surprised to find his friend looking sad and down-cast, absorbed in deep meditation, not on account of the brief which was lying in his lap, but of Maud Osborne, whose memory had always haunted him. Years had passed, but the old love-wounds had not been staunched by time. The incisions were terribly deep.

"What's the matter, old boy?" said Bagla Bhagat, tapping Rustim on the shoulder. "Love-sick again? Ah! I see, you have some lovely girl in your mind. But beware. Beauty without love is like bread without butter and jam which will stick into your throat when it gets stale."

"Don't talk nonsense. It verges on vulgarity."

"You are squeamish. Well, my martinet, I want you to go to Delhi with me as my guest. I won't have 'No' from you," said Bagla Bhagat.

"I thank you for your kind invitation, but I don't think I shall go. The Durbar will be a very grand affair, and I am sure you will have a very pleasant time of it at Delhi."

"I hope so," replied Bagla Bhagat, "but the Durbar will be an idle, spectacular pageant like the fire-works which will be let off there."

It will be a scandalous waste of public money at the present time when plague and famine are stalking forth in the country."

"You are right. I am sure, if the real state of affairs had been brought to the notice of the King, he would have vetoed the Durbar. He is a man of sterling good sense and great foresight."

"You forget that Lord Curzon wants to play the role of my Sovereign Lord the King-Emperor of India. That man is awfully vain."

"I should not like to impute motives to his Lordship, but I think a permanent memorial in the form of a Research Institute, a technical art-college, or some similar institution of public utility would have been much more welcome to the people than the vain pageant of a Durbar."

"The people echoed and re-echoed that opinion. But who cared for them? They might as well have cried out in the wilderness. But I must be off, as I have an appointment with Sir Magnus," continued Bagla Bhagat looking at the timepiece in the room. "Ta ta, old chap."

## CHAPTER XXX.

## A DOUBLE-DEALING.

SIR MAGNUS was no other than our old friend Mr. Magnus Myope, who had, by this time, risen high on the official ladder, overtopping not a few of his seniors in the Service. He had now reached almost the uppermost rung, and had been decorated with a knighthood.

"I'm so glad to see you," said he to Mr. Bagla Bhagat as that gentleman stood in his presence, respectfully salaaming him.

"Thank you, sir. I have come to pay my respects to you."

"Any news?"

"Nothing in particular, save that people are anxiously looking forward to the Durbar."

"I'm afraid the Durbar is not much in favour with the people. They like a permanent memorial to perpetuate the event."

"No, sir, no. The Durbar is essential in an Oriental country like India. It is only the Congressmen, who have been raising a hue and cry against it, in order to decry Lord Curzon. His Excellency is to them like a red rag to the bull."

“Dear me, I did not know that.”

“It is a fact, though. Government ought to abolish the Congress. It is a hot-bed of sedition and disloyalty.”

“I have never liked that assembly ; but I don't think it can be styled seditious.”

“I beg to differ from you, sir. The Congress is the root of all evil.”

“Perhaps you are right. Your loyalty does you credit, and you deserve to be on the Legislative Council.”

“Thank you, sir, for your kind opinion. By the way, may I ask what has become of your project to erect a marble arch in Rotten Row ? I think it is an excellent project.”

“I'm glad you so like it. The sole difficulty is to raise money. Would you like to contribute a lac of rupees to it?”

“I would certainly, if you so wish it.”

“Many thanks,” said Sir Magnus, feeling highly gratified with Bagla Bhagat's loyalty and munificence, which, in his opinion, deserved to be rewarded with a knighthood and a seat on the Legislative Council.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

## A CONFESSION.

MAN proposes, God disposes. Mr. Bagla Bhagat was to have gone to Delhi, but illness overtook him which soon grew serious. During his illness, Rustim paid him several visits, when one day he said to him, "Rustim I am dying."

"No, you are not," replied Rustim encouragingly.

"It is of no use deceiving myself," resumed Mr. Bagla Bhagat. "My eyes are no longer blinded by the mist of materialism. I shall soon go the way millions have gone before me. There is, however, a great load on my mind, of which I wish to unburden myself. I have lived a wicked and ignoble life. By toadyism and duplicity I became a justice of the peace, a member of the Municipal Corporation, a fellow of the University, and a C. I. E. If I live, I may soon become a knight as well as a member of the Legislative Council. There is Sir Magnus Myope's project to erect a marble arch in Rotten Row, and I have promised to contribute a lac of rupees to it. Why? Not that I liked it, but I wanted to satiate

my vanity. I always hankered after honours and dignity, and in order to get them I played hard and fast with truth, vituperated, vilified and misrepresented my own country-men to the Rulers, and fanned the flame of prejudice in them. If I had but acted rightly, what valuable services I could have rendered both to the Rulers and the Ruled. But what did I care for them? I only wanted titles and rank which were the be-all and the end-all of my existence. How very wicked? The world is false, and men are the worshippers not of God but of Mammon. For the sake of my wealth, my friend Sir Butterdas—a humbug of the first water, who reviles me behind my back, but praises me to my face—got up a banquet in my honour when I became a C. I. E. It was only a case of you scratch my back and I scratch yours? When he was knighted, I organized a banquet for him at his suggestion, and he did the same at mine. What a laudatory address was presented to me then? I was called a patriot, a philanthropist and a perennial fountain of liberality, generosity, charity, magnanimity, &c., &c. Could flattery be more fulsome than this? The next morning the newspapers flared with my encomiums, and continued to extol me for days together. The Indian Press, both English and Vernacular are



sooner spell-bound by the glamour of riches than the Press elsewhere. But honours and riches will not help me now, and my pampered body will soon be reduced to ashes. From dust I have risen and to dust will go my body. The soul will soon be before my Maker. What answer shall I give Him? Duplicity, chicanery, greed, falsehood, and vanity will not help me there. I envy you, Rustim. I wish I had lived a true and pious life. Piety does not consist in feasting *Sadhoos*\* and *Fakirs*,† or in observing fasts and rituals. Such pseudo-piety will not avail. May God forgive me! But, Rustim, I beg your forgiveness also. I have done you immense wrong.”

“No, you have not. You have always been very kind to me,” interrupted Rustim.

“I have done you a wrong. Listen. I dashed your cup of happiness and separated you from Miss Osborne.” At this Rustim started. “I knew it would startle you,” continued Bagla Bhagat. “I knew you would call me a scoundrel and a villain, but bear with me for a while. I intercepted two of your letters to Miss Osborne and one of hers to you. I then took mean advantage of the close resemblance between your handwriting and mine, and wrote a letter feigning to be yours, begging Miss

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\* Mendicants. † Beggars.

Osborne to break off the engagement. The forgery—I am ashamed to own—succeeded, particularly on account of my having used paper bearing your monogram and address. Poor Miss Osborne—I beg her forgiveness also—was deceived, and wrote the answer, which broke your heart and stunned you with grief. Rustim, forgive me. I did not do it with the intention of hurting you. I loved you too well for that. My judgment was warped by bigotry and religious frenzy. I looked upon a mixed marriage as a wicked sin, and thus prevented the union of two spotless hearts. I am sorry, very sorry. Forgive me. Rustim, do you remember your up-country client, who paid you Rs. 2,000, and never turned up afterwards. Well, he was my cousin's overseer, and the money he paid you was mine. I knew you needed it badly, but that you would not accept any pecuniary succour from me. So I resorted to that trick. Don't think I mention it in mitigation of the forgery. Oh, no. I mention it to show that whatever might have been my foibles, I have always tried to be a friend to you. Say that you forgive me." Here Bagla Bhagat looked pleadingly at Rustim, whose kind heart was moved, in spite of the grief and anger with which it was at the time convulsing at the sudden confession.

"I do forgive you," said Rustim, "if you so wish it, and also thank you very much for your timely help."

"Ah, I feel a little relieved in mind now. God bless you, Rustim. You are a noble soul." Bagla Bhagat then lay silent overpowered by exhaustion.

Rustim went home, paralyzed with grief. "Ah! Bagla," he mused, "you wrecked my happiness, and stabbed my honour. What must have Maud thought of me? A villain and a scoundrel, I am sure. Maud's letter perplexed me when I read it, but I see the cause of it now. She is a gem, an incarnation of forbearance, magnanimity and grace, and at once absolved me from my plighted troth."

Rustim then drew a cheque for Rs. 2,000, in favour of Bagla Bhagat, and sent it by post, but before it could reach the latter the next morning, the last grain of sand in the hour-glass of his life had run out.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## A WINDFALL.

“**B**AGLA is dead,” mused Rustim. “He sacrificed me on the altar of bigotry and prejudice. But are not thousands hecatombed on that altar daily? Sectarianism and castes are the greatest causes that afflict India. Progress is slain, reform is throttled, and national growth is crippled for their sake. India cannot be great or mighty as long as she is tied hand and foot to the chains of sectarianism and caste. The chains are heavy, and grip her tightly, but they must be broken. Let her sons do their duty bravely, courageously and fearlessly, instead of bewailing her lot. I must see Maud. I must go to England. But where is the money! There are parents to be thought of. I cannot leave them to suffer discomfort, poor dears.” Here Rustim prayed fervently to God for help. His prayer was listened to, for after some months he drew a prize of three lacs of rupees in the Calcutta Derby Sweep. Shortly thereafter, he sailed for England.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## AN EVERLASTING UNION.

IT was the middle of summer, the sky was clear and bright, and the great Metropolis of the mightiest Empire in the world was, as usual with the hum and buzz of its vast population. Rustim's heart leapt with delight as his eyes dwelt on the old scenes on his way from the Charing Cross Station, where he had just alighted, to the Hotel Metropole. There stood great Nelson on the colossal column in Trafalgar Square, proclaiming his country's glory; yonder was the National Gallery containing the Nation's riches in fine arts and painting, and all around were clustered together stately buildings and historic mansions which bespoke of England's wealth and greatness. The Big Ben struck the hour of four as Rustim entered the portals of the palatial Hotel, and his mind involuntarily wandered to Westminster House and the greatest Legislative Assembly in the world. "England's greatness," mused he, "lies in its love of freedom and the virile virtue of its House of Commons. Verily, it is the El Dorado of mankind, rich in the precious gems of justice and liberty."

The weather was fine and glorious, and Rustim decided to walk down to Hyde Park, thinking it unwise to drop in abruptly upon Maud. Therefore, after a light refreshment, he sallied forth on his way to the Park. There stood Achilles as mute as before, the Serpentine meandered as leisurely as of old, bevvies of ladies rippled forth with laughter as they once used to do, children romped about and played as they did years ago, but where was *his* Maud, who always kept him company in his quiet strolls in those regions? The merest thought of it damped his spirits, and as he walked moodily along, he heard 'Roos' articulated in a feeble voice.

"Maud," cried he, starting from his reverie.

"Mr. Rustim—" said Maud, feeling much chagrined at having hailed Rustim by his old pet name. He was uppermost in her mind, and hence the involuntary exclamation of familiarity. She, therefore, wished to rectify the mistake and withdraw after making a conventional inquiry after his health, in obedience to her sense of propriety, but her heart revolted against her judgment, and she stood transfixed to the ground, confused and trembling, unable to complete her sentence.

Rustim grasped the situation, and said: "It breaks my heart to see you look so pale

and haggard. It breaks my heart to think that I have been the cause of all your suffering and sorrow. I would not hurt your feelings for the world, Miss Osborne. Pray, hear me for a while. I have come all the way from India to declare my innocence and to worship once more at your shrine, if you will allow me. I did not write the letter, which asked you to break off our engagement. It was a cruel forgery."

"What!" exclaimed Maud, greatly surprised.

"That letter was a forgery," reiterated Rustim, who then poured forth into her attentive ear his tale of all that had happened, including his marriage, his motive for contracting it, his contretemps with his wife and her death later, the confession of Bagla Bhagat, his resolve to come to England, the impediment of impecuniosity in his way and the final windfall of the first prize in the Calcutta Derby Sweep.

"What a wretch that man must have been! I am very sorry for your sake," said Maud feelingly.

"He was a victim to the hallucinations of bigotry. He is dead. May God forgive him."

"The past cannot be recalled, and forgiveness is divine after all," said Miss Osborne.

"I ask your forgiveness."

“Granted. The Goddess is pleased to accept your offerings,” returned Maud a little smiling. “But it is I who ought to ask your forgiveness. Had I been but a little circumspect, the forgery would have been detected and our lives would not have become so miserable. But Providence in his wisdom thought it right to test us on the crucible of adversity——”

“And you have stood the test nobly. You are an angel, Maud,” interrupted Rustim.

“Dear, I cannot stay here much longer on account of ill-health. I’ve been ailing for some time past. I’ll go home,” said Maud, and Rustim drove with her in her brougham to ‘Ooty House’ at Kensington. They sat nestling against each other, Rustim holding her hand in his. Oh, that contact! What a radiant current of pleasure it transmitted to both of them! The battery of love, after all, is the most vivifying, reviving and exhilarating mechanism of God. What it can achieve you cannot realize, dear reader, unless you are impregnated with its balmy current. Maud’s hectic face beamed with joy, and Rustim’s flushed with delight, oblivious of the vicissitudes they had both undergone.

The first thing that Maud did, after they arrived at her residence, was to take out of an escritoire the letter, which had estranged them



for years, and she read it. "Oh Roos!" she exclaimed after perusing it, "how very stupid of me not to have noticed the forgery? The handwriting resembles yours so much, but I know now it is not yours. I could say it any day. But I was ill when I received the letter, and read it through hurriedly, least suspecting anything amiss. For two weeks successively before this letter, I had not heard from you—a most unusual thing, dear—and a reference to that fact in the letter and your monogram on it threw me off my guard. I was mightily deceived. Roos, I am so very sorry."

Miss Osborne was genuinely penitent for the wrong, which, she believed, she had inflicted both upon herself and her lover. Her face told its own tale, and Rustim quickly gathering her to his bosom said, "No more of this, my tootsey-pootsey. I am much more to blame than you. The tornardo has blown over, and our sky is now bright and clear."

"Roos, you won't leave me again?"

"No, not for the world," replied he, kissing her.

At that moment a gold locket peered out from under the front of her blouse, and Rustim opening it said: "What a huge thing it is, Maud?" It consisted of three compartments; the first contained his photo, the second his

lock of hair, and the third the canonized remains of the chrysanthemum, his first gift to her. He was pleased beyond all measure at such steadfast devotion, and exclaimed from the heart of his heart, "Happy is the man who has you for his wife. He is much more to be envied than a multi-millionaire or even a mighty prince."

"Oh, you silly boy."

"No, my Venus. You don't know your value. You are more precious than pearls and diamonds, coronets and crowns."

At this juncture, before Maud could answer, there was the sound as of a muffled knock at the door; and Rustim, imagining it to be from a servant, released her from his embrace. In walked pussy cat, mewing a happy mew, and both Maud and Rustim laughed at their mistake.

"Roos, won't you sing? I should like to hear you so much," said Maud.

"I would with pleasure. But I have not sung for ten years. The last time I sang was with you."

"Oh, you dear boy," said Maud, kissing his swarthy face. It was your Indian asceticism that you would not sing without me. I always sang, dear, the songs of which you were fond. They sustained me in my loneliness, and lightened the weight of my sorrow."

Miss Osborne then played the piano, Rustim singing an old love-song. At its conclusion she said, "Dear, you are out of form, but your voice is still as rich and full as once it was."

"Thanks, Maudie, but you are a partial judge."

Miss Osborne then sang, and Rustim sang again, and they both sang together. Dinner was announced, after partaking of which, Rustim kissed Maud a fond good-night.

"Won't you drive, dear? I'll have the carriage ready soon."

"No, thanks. I'd much rather walk."

So saying, he kissed Maud again, and Maud kissed him, asking him to call early the next day. He left, and with a springy step walked along the fragrant path of joy, London appearing a fairy-land to his amorous eyes. Oh! the enchantment of love. How fascinating and lovely things look when viewed from its binocular! Love is divine. Still, how often it is blasphemed. Sensualism is called love; animalism and ephemeral whim are called love. What blasphemy! That is not love, but a mere phantasmagoria, which deludes the eye and deceives the heart, and passes off as soon as the inclination is gratified. Thus we have the spectacle of some men and women,

who, like wasps and bees, fly from flower to flower in quest of matrimony. Thus we hear the discordant clashing of the cymbals of matrimonial bickerings and quarrels, culminating in law-suits. Thus do we hear of homes wrecked, youth slain, virtue prostituted and honour blasted to the four winds. True love is immune from all this misery. Like the eternal fire, it burns ever bright and clear, radiating equally in the hut of the peasant and the palace of the prince, the warmth of joy, happiness, contentment, constancy, devotion and courage. The wave of adversity cannot submerge it, the wind of poverty cannot extinguish it, and the blandishments of coquetry cannot pollute it. It is always young, and never grows old. The inexorable scythe of time cannot kill it, nor can the chasm of distance engulf it. It knows no caste or colour, race or nation, and its spiritual cement is the best unifier of hearts, which even death cannot sever.

Early next morning Miss Osborne wrote to Miss Collins, inviting her to spend the day with her. She came, and was surprised to find her friend beaming with happiness. That was a most unusual sight, for Miss Osborne, like King Henry I of England after he heard the sad news of the drowning of his children, never smiled since the day she received the

alleged letter of Rustim. The funeral knell of her joy had been tolled on that day, and what Miss Collins had seen since was not Maud—the beautiful, radiant and sunny Maud—but only her apparition. Very often she had emptied the vial of imprecations upon Rustim for wrecking Maud's life. Very often had she persuaded and chid Maud for fretting over that 'perfidious Oriental.' Very often had she attempted to disenchant her by argument and reason from the evil effects of the magic wand of love of that Indian magician. But all to no purpose. Therefore, the sudden transformation, which she now beheld in Maud's spirits, bewildered her, and led her to wonder what miracle had wrought this welcome change after the long spell of ten years.

"I've some good news to tell you, Ada dear," said Maud.

"I dare say. Coming events cast their shadows before."

"Then you know it. Has he not behaved most handsomely?"

"Who?"

"Roos, of course."

"What are you talking, Maudie?"

"I thought you knew it, when you talked of the shadows of coming events."

"I only meant that you were your old self again beaming with joy."

"Roos has arrived in London."

"Oh! has that fluttered you so much? He is not worthy of your thought."

"Isn't he? He is a jewel."

"No, he is a worthless stone. I should not touch him with a pair of tongs, if I were you."

"My wise and thoughtful Ada has lost her balance of judgment in her affection for me," said Maud. "Roos has not in any way wronged me, but it is I who have wronged him. That letter was a forgery."

"That is what *he* has told you, I dare say. I never thought you were so gullible."

Maud was nettled at this, but without further parley, handed the letter to her, who, upon reading it, exclaimed: "This is not Mr. Rustim's handwriting, although the resemblance is very great. How could you have ever been thus deceived, Maud? I am surprised at you."

"Well you may be, dear," said Maud, who then narrated to her the events of the previous day and all that she had heard from Rustim about the letter and his vicissitudes, depicting him as a martyr sacrificed on the cross of her stupidity and the wicked bigotry of Bagla Bhagat.

At this narrative of Rustim's troubles, which, by the way, had been gorgeously embellished by Miss Osborne with the brush of Cupid, Miss Collins was moved, and her heart alternately heaved with the seismic shocks of joy and grief. She was immeasurably delighted that the two lovers had met after all, and that virtue had its reward, but she was sincerely sorry that she had done injustice to a man, both honest and honourable, and resolved never to be precipitate in her judgment, or to act upon insufficient data or ill-founded assumptions. She was a sensible woman, but had floundered on account of her having assumed the letter to be genuine. What wonder that she tripped, when stalwart statesmen and veteran politicians are not slow to smell the noxious fumes of sedition where none exist, and brand a whole nation like the diversified people of India with disloyalty upon the flimsiest evidence and *ex parte* representations of some men inoculated with the serum of prejudice and self-interestedness ! Miss Collins was after all a woman, and, in the fulness of her true womanliness, she not only acknowledged her fault, but promptly decided to atone for it by a handsome apology to Rustim. She had not, like the statesmen and politicians, the fetish of prestige to worship.

A short time afterwards, Rustim arrived, and Miss Collins was delighted to see him as was he to see her after a lapse of so many years. She was affected to notice that he had been cruelly lashed by the thong of misfortune, the weals of which were evident all over his dark manly visage. She, therefore, reproached herself more vehemently for having misjudged him, and told him unreservedly how she had wronged him, and begged his forgiveness.

Seeing her agitated with emotion and much vexed with herself, Rustim kindly held her by the hand and said: "Your candour does honour to your heart, but you do not deserve much blame after all. Let us talk no more about this, my dear Miss Collins, for all's well that ends well."

Then, in order to change the conversation, he turned to Miss Osborne and said: "Who do you think I met this morning? Guess, dearie?"

"Don't know I'm sure, dear."

"Major Spooney of the 7th Light Infantry. I had just stepped out of my hotel, when he rapped me on the shoulder from behind, and greeted me with a regular John Bull 'hullo,' and testified his unfeigned pleasure at seeing me. He is a very good-hearted man, and I was glad to learn from him that his troubles were over."



"I thought he was one of those rakish drones, who pestered society by their silly buzz," observed Maud.

"Adversity is a great refinery. No man has come out of it more chastened than the Major. There was his bonny little daughter with him. Don't I love children?"

At this Maud blushed, feeling a thrill of pleasure.

"Has he then made up with his wife? She is a siren," put in Miss Collins with a scornful toss of the head.

"Oh dear, no. That woman is dead, and her child too. She forged Mr. Popgun's signature on a cheque, and with the money she got she fled to America with her child. There an electric wire fell over them, and instantaneous death ensued. The child I saw this morning was by the Major's new wife. He has married the plump lady in black silk, who was a fellow-passenger with me on board the ship *Good Hope*."

"Oh! you rude boy," ejaculated Miss Osborne.

"I did not mean to be disrespectful to the new Mrs. Spooner, but that was how I had always known her, Maudie."

"She is not a refined woman, I am told," interposed Miss Collins.

"Perhaps not. But handsome is that handsome does," said Rustim.

"Quite true. I'm glad the Major has found a good woman for his wife," returned Miss Collins.

The conversation then drifted into another channel, and soon they all three began to revel in the past and talked of the olden days. The past has a peculiar fascination for mankind. The most commonplace events and the most commonplace actors in the world's drama are hallowed by it. The past is always sacred, the present is inglorious and the future hopeful. There was merriment and joy in 'Ooty House' throughout that day. Time fled with amazing rapidity, and at eventide Miss Collins and Rustim left together, the latter escorting the former to her residence at Highbury Hill.

It never rains but pours, and Rustim's cup of happiness was full to the brim on that day, Maud having consented to their wedding being fixed for that day next month.

But his happiness was transitory and was soon overshadowed by Maud's illness. She had become consumptive and her heart had been affected, since the receipt of the accursed letter by her. She was ailing even when she met Rustim in Hyde Park, but her spirits were only revived by the magic charm of love.

There now came a relapse, and Rustim's heart withered within him. He, however, put on a most smiling face for her sake from day to day, but she saw through the imposture very clearly. At length, there appeared a little improvement in Maud's health, and, one day holding his hand in hers, she said, "Dear, we shall be married a week hence."

"Darling, we had better put off our marriage until you are sufficiently recovered."

"How good you are, Roos? But I should not put it off on any account."

"Thy will be done, my sweetie," said Rustim, kissing her.

A week later they were married. It was a quiet wedding. Mr. and Mrs. Rustim did not go abroad for their honeymoon as originally arranged, in consequence of the latter's weak health, but proceeded at once to their new home at Norwood. It was a charming house, and Rustim had furnished it according to his own idea, Maud having left it to him entirely on account of her ill-health. She went over her new home with her husband, and was pleased both with his taste and his solicitude for her comfort.

"The furniture is beautiful and the pictures lovely. I did not know that you were a connoisseur," said Maud.

“I am a connoisseur of beauty, most certainly. Who can challenge my judgment there?” So saying, he looked full into her face holding her by the waist, and kissed her.

About an hour elapsed, and Maud complained of slight pain in her chest and lay down to rest, Rustim sitting beside her. After a while she said, pressing her husband's hand to her bosom, “Dearest, do you remember the gipsy-woman? Her predictions have come true after all. I feel very happy. We are now one, Roos.”

“Yes, dear, for now and for ever,” said Rustim, kissing her. She smiled a most happy smile, but that was her last smile, for, within a short time, her heart failed, and she passed away into eternity before Rustim could realize what had happened.

Who could fathom the depth and intensity of Rustim's grief? The joy-bells had scarcely ceased to ring their melodious music, the congratulations of friends had scarcely ceased to pour in, and the nectar of matrimony had hardly been sipped when his bride lay dead on her bridal bed. There was a smile upon her chaste lips, and happiness and repose on her angelic face. She did not look dead, but sleeping the sleep of the just and the true. Rustim kissed her lips again and again, in spite

• of the admonition of the Doctor, who told him that, although the failure of heart was the immediate cause of death, consumption was at the bottom of it, which was infectious. But what did he care for infection? He was not afraid of death. Death is not a hideous monster, but an angel; not a curse, but a blessing to mankind. On his wings we soar to the glorious realms of Heaven after playing our sublunary parts on the wide stage of the world. There sorrow will not afflict us, pain will not torment us, misery will not distract us, and the whiz of wicked passion and loathsome greed for pelf which perpetually dins into our ears here, will not worry us there. We all, whether prince or peasant, rich or poor, white or black, Parsi or Christian, Hindu or Mahomedan, Buddhist or Jew, shall be draped there in the celestial vestments of purity, and live on the ambrosia of holiness. Why then fear Death! The flutter of his wings can only frighten the coward and not the brave, the irreligious and not the godly, the tyrant and not the just, the hypocrite and not the honest, the liar and not the truthful. As Death flaps his wings near a man's ears, there floats before his vision the panoramic scenes of his good and bad actions, and his heart quails and his limbs shake as he thinks of the wrongs

committed by him and the answer he would have to make for them to his Maker. It is then that he feels that riches cannot buy him Paradise, or hypocrisy, lies and tyranny can unlock the doors of Heaven that are shut against him. It is then that he realizes that he had struggled all his life for the shadow and not the substance, and that, in spite of all his worldly acquisitions, naked must he go as naked he had come. The thought of it saddens him and repentance comes upon him, but it is too late then. Rustim was not afraid of death; for would not death which had now separated him from his wife, reunite him to her everlastingly? It was the separation only which was heart-rending to him.

The funeral was grand and imposing, and Mrs. Rustim was buried in the presence of a distinguished company, including Sir Grasping Grabber, Mr. Numskull Firebrand and other Anglo-Indian notables, who had gathered in a large number, for Mrs. Rustim was the niece of the late Sir Augustus Goodfellow—a man renowned for his greatness of mind and goodness of heart. Rustim was struck dead with grief, his face looking ghastly pale, and tears rolling down his cheeks from the artesian well of sorrow which his wife's death had sunk within him. All who were present at the grave were affected to see him reverently bowing again and again

to the mortal remains of his dear wife, saying "Darling, our parting won't be long, I hope." Rustim, be it remembered, was after all a child of the sunny East. Even the great Sir Grasping was moved at the sight and wiped his eyes now and then, and his distinguished friend Mr. Firebrand blew his nose and cleared his throat, overpowered by grief. The death of a young, beautiful and spotless woman, who is an honour to her sex and is an incarnation of virtue, piety, and goodness, can never fail to evoke an outburst of universal sorrow, and genuine sympathy was evinced everywhere for Rustim for the irreparable loss that he had sustained. It is terrible to become a widower on one's own wedding-day.

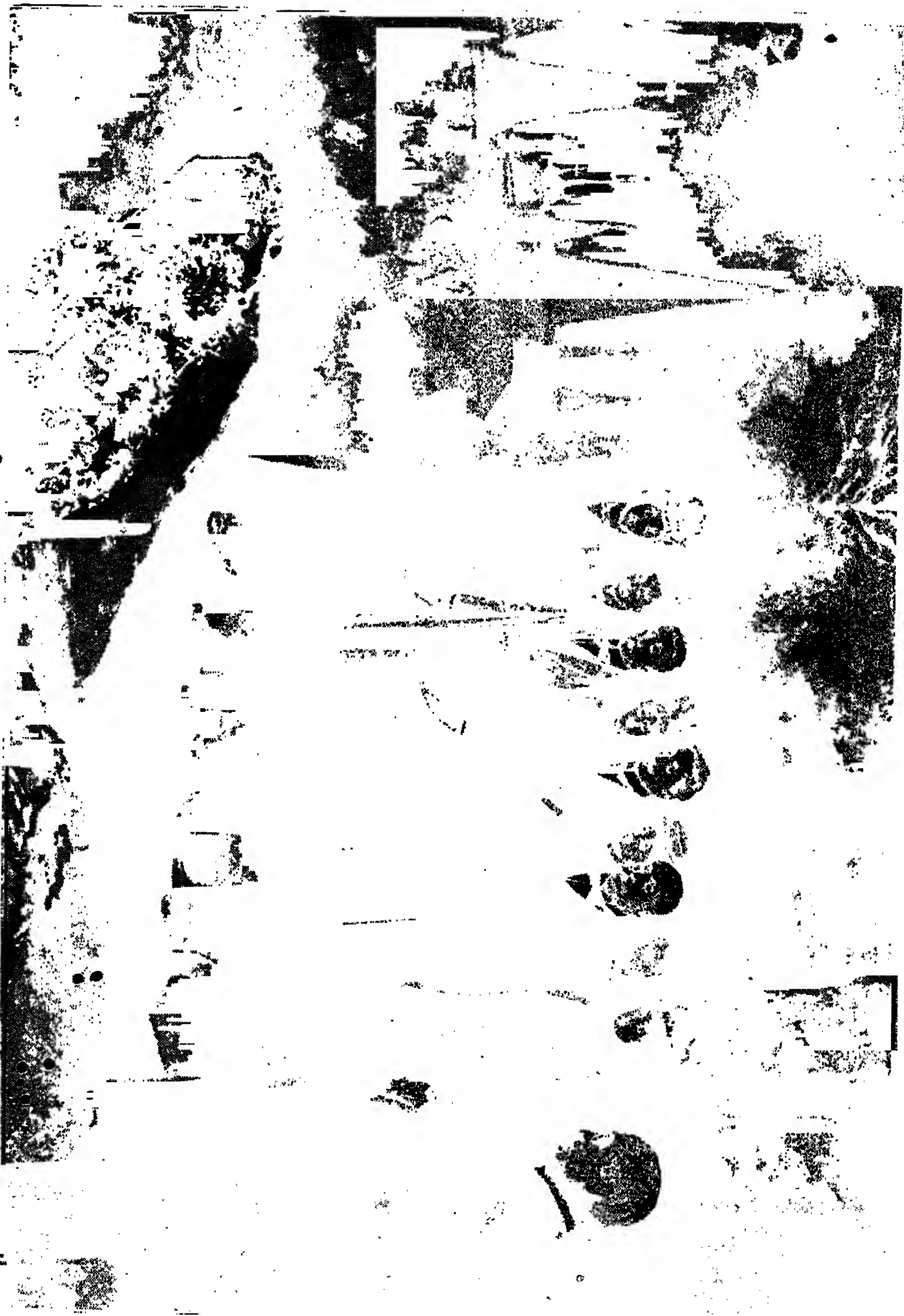
Rustim returned home from the cemetery, and would not be persuaded by his kind friends, the Warblers, the Uprights and the Collins to stay away from it at least for a short time. As long as Maud's remains were in the house he had derived some consolation from it, but that too was now gone, and the cosy, elegantly furnished home looked bleak and uncheery to him. The sun had set for him for ever. The retina of his eyes was gone, and the Venus of his heart had ceased to shine. What was there left for him, but to think of Maud and the happy day that sooner or later must come when he would be reunited to her for ever and

evermore. He preferred to occupy the room in which his wife had died, and to sleep in the bed on which she had slept her eternal sleep. From day to day he laid choice flowers on her grave, and hung about it for hours, thinking of the precious treasure which was entombed in it. Some people thought that his mind was affected. It was not so. Intuitively he had felt that he could not live without Maud any longer, nor could Maud do without him. The spiritual telegraphy of Nature was at work. About a fortnight elapsed. The despair of loneliness had already undermined his constitution, when one day, as he knelt before his wife's grave in silent prayer, he got soaking wet in a heavy shower of rain. The next day he was down with influenza, and four days afterwards, in spite of the great care and attention bestowed upon him by Mrs. Warbler, Mrs. Upright and Miss Collins, he placidly passed away to meet his Maud, to the great sorrow of them all. He was buried beside his wife, Sir Grasping Grabber, Mr. Numskull Firebrand, Mr. Polemic Popgun, Major and Mrs. Spooney, Mr. and Mrs. Constancio Upright, Mrs. Warbler and her daughter, Mr. Volatile Gaspot, the Rev. Mr. Gorbelly Puffy and the Collins attending his funeral. The sight was very solemn. There lay beside each other a great man and



a great woman—not great according to the conventional nomenclature of the world which has sanctified hypocrisy into piety, and has exalted filibustering duplicity into diplomacy, bumptious bumbledom into administrative efficiency, blatant demagogism into patriotism, disingenuous plaudits of officialdom into the virtue of good citizenship, mendacious effrontery into courage, and tinsel brummagemism into solid grit. Rustim and Maud were not great in that way. They were great in good thoughts, good words and good actions. As they lay there, what pabulum they afforded for reflection! Truly speaking they were not dead, but living an eternal life interlocked in each other's loving embrace, never to be parted by grief or sorrow, suffering or trial, jealousy or anger, machination or duplicity. They belied the trite aphorism that the East would always remain the East and the West would remain the West, never likely to unite with each other. Their union showed that England and India could be one not in name but in reality, and not for a time but for good and for ever. Sir Grasping was impressed by this thought, which came to him like a revelation.

A few days later, at the Bureaucratic Club of which Sir Grasping was the President, he spoke to his distinguished friends eulogistically about the departed Indian and his English wife, and added: "Mr. and Mrs. Rustim have



“As they lay there, what a pabulum they afforded for reflection! . . . . . Their  
union showed that England and India could be one not in name but in  
reality, and not for a time but for good and for ever.”

taught us a moral. By their everlasting union they have proved beyond all doubt that a permanent union between England and India is not at all improbable, much less impossible. The way to it lies with us. I am afraid that we have been on the wrong track for a long time past. Our administration needs overhauling, and our attitude towards the people must be changed. We must cease to distrust them, and slay now and for ever the fetish of prestige, for at its altar we have often sacrificed our sense of justice and fair-play. We must learn to treat the people with respect and not supercilious arrogance, kindness and not disdain, sympathy and not contempt. Our agrarian policy is bleeding the nation to death, and our flouting disregard for their legitimate aspirations is a source of menace to our Rule. The Legislative Councils must be reformed, but the reform must not be rendered a mockery by stocking them with titled noodles and brainless popinjays of rich families. To know the wishes of the people we must have in our Councils men of stalwart independence and honesty of purpose like Rustim, and not cringing flatterers and sneaking cowards like Bagla Bhagat. Further, we must see that the judicial is separated from the executive branch of the Service, and that magistrates like Magnus Myope and Bhampat Rao become a matter of

past history. We must also see that the Police force is reorganized, and Badmash Rao and Loocha Khan are consigned to the limbo of oblivion. Let Reform be the shibboleth of our Administration, and Contentment of the People emblazoned upon our flag as our motto."

"You are right, Sir Grasping," observed Mr. Firebrand. "The Indian National Congress has been advocating these reforms for years past. I am afraid I had misjudged that assembly, when, ten years ago, I denounced it as a dynamo of sedition and disloyalty in my speech at Westminster Hall. Poor Rustim became very indignant then, and repelled the charge most vehemently as a libel upon his countrymen. He was right. I, however, suspected him of disloyalty in my intolerance of criticism and unfriendliness towards the educated Indians. Rustim was not an invertebrate demagogue permeated by disloyalty, but a sturdy patriot with a constitutional backbone. There may be some items in the programme of the National Congress which we may not be prepared to concede to the people at present, but I find in it nothing objectionable or disloyal. I do think that we ought to give the Congress not only a respectful hearing, but must take part in it ourselves, and thus inspire confidence in the people and learn their wants and wishes at first hand.

Verily, Mr. and Mrs. Rustim have shown to us that India and England can be united permanently by the bonds of mutual love, mutual respect and mutual confidence."

Mr. Polemic Popgun most heartily concurred in the remarks made by the two great satellites of the Bureaucratic Club, and Mr. Bungling Blowhard, the great Editor of the renowned *Bagpipe Chronicle*, expressed his conviction that the policy, which the *Chronicle* had pursued, of misrepresenting Indians to Englishmen, flouting at their legitimate aspirations, scoffing at their just grievances, vilifying their patriots, fomenting discord between Hindus and Mahomedans, and defending Europeans who might happen to offend against the laws of the country by insulting, assaulting and sometimes killing innocent Indians, was suicidal to the best interests of the British Rule in India. "In future," he added, "the policy of the *Chronicle* would be to hold the balance even between Indians and Anglo-Indians, for in it lay, as was said by the late Mr. Rustim, the safety and well-being of our Empire."

Mr. Volatile Gaspot was of opinion that the Act of 1818 ought to be abolished, and the Russianized method of dealing with alleged political offenders ought to be discarded. The Criminal Law of India is far-reaching, in all conscience. The administration of justice must be unalloyed

by racial prejudices and colour distinctions, so as to prevent our Rule from being stranded on the rock of disaffection and hatred.

Mr. Constancio Upright paid a high tribute of praise to the memory of his departed friend, and said that if his spirit could but hear us he would be pleased. He then added: "For lack of appreciation of his high intellectual attainments Rustim died an unknown man, but there are thousands and thousands of Rustims in India who are capable, honest and true, but who rot for want of an adequate outlet for their intellectual attainments. What a grand thing it would be for our Rule to conserve and utilize this wasting torrent of intelligence, greatness, magnanimity and fervour. The educated Indians are but of our own creation, and proud must we feel for them and not denounce them. They do not want to drive us out of their country or sever their connection with us, for they appreciate the beneficence of our Rule. All that they clamour for is reform. They ask us to treat them as our fellow-subjects and not as slaves, as our equals and not inferiors, and resent bitterly discourtesy and disdain which we manifest towards them. Our present policy is anything but wise, for we are retrograding and not advancing, staggered by the wave of education and national awakening which is now slowly but steadily inundating the

country. We think the principle enunciated in the Proclamation of 1858 to be incapable of fulfilment, and by our myopia of selfishness and prejudice we are alienating the confidence, respect, and good-will of the people. It is true that there are Extremists stalking in the country, but their number is infinitesimally small. Such men are met with in every land and every clime. Tares will always grow with wheat. Why should we then distrust, on their account, a whole nation? Wholesale prosecution for sedition, muzzling of the Press, deprivation of freedom of speech will not avail us at all. ~~We~~ We may terrify the people for a while, but the rebound when it comes will be prodigious. Surely we cannot close a nation's chimney with safety, or sit tight on its safety-valve without fear of self-destruction. The people of India rightly look upon the Queen's Proclamation as the Magna Charta of their country. Let its fulfilment be our goal, undismayed by the chasm of self-interestedness on our right and that of timidity on our left, for in it lies after all the wisdom of true statesmanship, which, as the late Mr. Rustim observed in his speech, 'will make our Rule in India everlasting to the mutual advantage of both countries and to the glory and greatness of England.'"

Amen.